

# European Co-operation and Networking in Forest Communication

Gerben Janse



## **European Co-operation and Networking in Forest Communication**

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Project conducted at the European Forest Institute.

Author: Gerben Janse, European Forest Institute, Torikatu 34, 80100 Joensuu, Finland,  
Tel: +358 13 252 0261, Fax: +358 13 124 393, E-mail: [gerben.janse@efi.fi](mailto:gerben.janse@efi.fi)

## Foreword

Sharing information, creating knowledge and encouraging dialogue are tools to increase our opportunities to do the right thing, in the right way, utilising the best available technologies. Taking up one of the recommendations of the Forest Academy Finland (FAF) (for more information see [www.forestacademy.fi](http://www.forestacademy.fi)), the project “European Cooperation and Networking in Forest Communication”, of which this report is the result, was started. The FAF has been a joint effort of the Finnish Forest Association and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland to promote the goals mentioned above, particularly in the new and applicant countries of the EU. The aim of Forest Academy Finland is to:

- 1) Strengthen networking and understanding between European countries,
- 2) Support national forest sector development in the participating countries through exchange of experiences, and
- 3) Provide tools and capacity for communication about the potentials of forests in support of societal development.

Four forums were arranged in Finland during 2003 and 2004, and included a total of 118 participants from 15 countries. As a result of the forums, European challenges for forest sector development were identified, focusing on e.g. forest policy, state forestry, private forestry, human resources and employment, forest industries, wood products and wood energy.

During the discussions it was noted that most challenges related to the above topics involve communication and networking in one form or another. Accordingly, the forums of Forest Academy Finland placed special emphasis on developing ideas for strengthening European networking and co-operation in communication.

This report is the result of a study on European cooperation and networking in forest communication. The project has been funded and initiated by the Finnish Forest Association, and has been carried out at the European Forest Institute. Hopefully, the results of this study will prove valuable to people in- and outside of the forest sector at national and pan-European levels, in the sense that this study provides them with an overview on what is and what is not yet happening in the field of cooperation and networking in forest communication. In any case, the findings of the survey are relevant for supporting the planning of further communication activities at the pan-European level and as a strategic contribution to further forest policy deliberations.

The information presented in this report is the result of a series of expert interviews, an email survey, as well as literature and internet research. The opinions expressed in the discussion part of the report are based on statements done by the experts interviewed. The opinions expressed in the conclusion part are the author's.

The author wishes to thank all the people that have been so kind as to provide the input for this study, through the interviews and the email survey. Only because of their expertise this study has been possible.



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## Executive Summary

Communication is in fashion. Most organizations nowadays are talking about it, also in the forest sector. The thing is, they are “talking” about communication, but not so much communicating. In this study an analysis was carried out 1) at the European level, and 2) at the national level, by means of four case country studies, i.e. Austria, Finland, Latvia and the United Kingdom.

For this study the forest sector has been defined as: forest industry, forest owners, national/international governmental bodies dealing with forest policy, state forestry administrations, and forest science. Apart from a division between European and national level, another division was made between sector internal communication, and sector external communication, i.e. communication with other relevant sectors as well as society at large.

Information was mainly collected through expert interviews, both face-to-face on-site interviews as well as telephone interviews, and literature and internet research. The following actors were interviewed and analyzed:

- Representatives of the most relevant Directorates General of the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Enterprise and Industry, and DG Environment),
- Representatives of forest-based industry federations (CEI-BOIS and CEPI), and forest owners associations (CEPF),
- Representatives of the Forest Communicators Network (FCN),
- Representatives of the UNECE/FAO Timber Branch
- Other relevant experts in forest sector communications (e.g. from IUFRO, MCPFE, and the European Forest Institute), as well as national experts.

The theoretical background for this project is based on various conceptualizations of communications; starting with basic one-way communication theories focusing on sender, message, medium and receiver, to more extensive models involving internal and external context of both sender and receiver, the joint creation of meaning, valuation and expectation feedback loops. Furthermore, concepts dealing with selective perception, attention, acceptance etc. are discussed to give some insight in the possible explanations for the effort it takes to actually reach intended target groups. In addition, communication is discussed from the perspective of public relations, lobbying and "joint" two-way communication processes. Communication is also placed in the context of diffusion of innovation, which offers interesting concepts such as opinion leader theory. Finally, communication as a policy instrument is elaborated upon, by taking into consideration theories like the Advocacy Coalition framework, parentele and clientele relations, theories on bureaucracy, and the role of communication in negotiations and in the policy cycle.

One of the most interesting observations of this study was that the forest sector (especially at the European level) is struggling with the question what it really wants to achieve with its communication efforts:

- Just to boost its image with the public?
- To be successful at policy lobbying?
- To really build relationships and two-way communication processes with other sectors and interest groups?

Although the general opinion in the sector is that a mix of these three is desirable, still much attention is directed towards one-way image campaigns. Further important questions for the forest sector involve: responsibility for communication (at which level?



Individual company, national federation, or European level federation), and added-value (when does cooperation in communication has added-value over individual efforts).

Main conclusions that can be drawn are:

At the national level intersectoral communication between forest sector and other sectors is normally better developed than at the international level, although for the new EU Member States more effort in sector-internal as well as external communication is needed.

In relation to image campaigns it has to be mentioned that although studies suggest a European-wide problem, it appears that although in some countries the sector's image is a problem, in other countries it is not (especially Scandinavian countries). For that reason there surely are differences in communication needs across countries in Europe.

Large-scale promotional activities are just starting and in spite of some cooperation between countries (e.g. "wood for good" and "ProHolz"), no European wide coordination platform is foreseen on the short term. Such a platform could benefit the coordination of activities across Europe, keeping in mind differences in national circumstances. It has to be said, however, that if the forest sector really wants to improve its image and acquire a social license to operate, it is not sufficient to focus on one-way communication. The forest sector realizes this and is increasingly listening to society as well.

In spite of the fact that the forest sector at the European level is a relatively close group, where most people know each other, the situation is different for the contact between countries' forest sectors. Only few initiatives (e.g. meeting of Member States' forestry directors) exist, hence communication between national forest sectors is not very well developed.

With regard to cooperation initiatives at the European level, the forest-based industries and forest owner's federations, together with the European Commission (i.e. DG Enterprise's Forest-based and Related Industries Unit) have been making an effort to strengthen their sector external communication. In spite of limited budget the sector has started with the identification of the most important target groups (youth, media, architects, universities) and consequent action to set up a framework for national organizations to reach these target groups.

In general, forest sector communication has shown a move from reactive to proactive communication. The forest sector is becoming more active when it comes to speaking out in the media – coming with news about forests and the forest sectors before "someone else does it". A major question here is, however, is whether the public is really interested in such news facts.

The forest sector is increasingly realizing that cooperation and networking are the only way for the sector to strengthen the impact of its communication – combined expertise, learning from each other's best practices, resources, pool of contacts etc. However, to come to successful cooperation a strong mandate (for the supra-organizational structure facilitating cooperation in communication) is required. By giving such a mandate, the individual forest sector interest representation organizations at the European level (who, in turn, are already representing national level federations, and thus indirectly the individual companies, owners, etc.) may perceive a certain loss of control. Added-value of cooperation has to be very clear, in order for organizations to give such a mandate. In addition, concerning networking (for the exchange of best practices, contacts etc.), it has to be mentioned that – how much of an open door it may be – that a network is as strong as its weakest link. Because networks are normally voluntary in nature, a

network needs engaged and active members, and above all an active secretariat that “keeps the network going”.

This report concludes with a set of recommendations:

- A first step for improving the sector’s intersectoral communication is to identify and reach the most important target groups – youth/schools, the media, architects/builders – (adoption of innovation / opinion leader strategy) through "telling by showing" and not by yet another brochure;
- After having set up a Technology Platform, it is now time to direct effort and resources to set up a cross-sectoral forum with other major stakeholders and, especially, high-level policy makers;
- Allocate funds and a strong mandate for a joint body, bringing together EU- and national level forest sector actors in order to facilitate cooperation in cross-sectoral communication;
- Further increase cooperation between national forest sectors in order to learn from each other's experiences and best practices in communicating with society;
- The sector has to become aware that communication is essential for an organization’s profile and existence – truly integrate communication in the organizational strategy.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Communication challenges in Europe

Communication has become a key element in present-day forestry. Forest issues have risen considerably on the global agenda and due to environmental and macro-economic interests other sectors and interest groups have increasingly started to take part in communication on forest issues. No longer is forest policy the sole concern of the forest administration and the forest sector (Montalembert 1995; Høgl 2000). Policy legitimization and acceptance, as well as the increased strength of interest groups (e.g. environmental NGOs), have given the public more weight as an actor in discussions on forests and nature (Buchy and Hoverman 2000; Weber and Christophersen 2002).

This has led to an increasing importance and impact of other sectoral policies on forestry, hence the need for cross-sectoral policy approaches. Logically, improving cooperation and communication is essential because of the difficulties brought about by the fragmentation of policy networks, at national and most certainly also at EU level. This fragmentation is mirrored in the domain specific composition of almost all EU institutions, and it is particularly pronounced concerning forest policy because of the wide distribution of competence within the European Commission (Høgl 2000). The Treaties on the European Union make no provision for a comprehensive common forestry policy – forest issues fall under a host of policy areas: agriculture, rural development, environment, trade, internal market, research, industry, development cooperation and energy policies (COM 1998). This plethora of forest related mandates have made it difficult to co-ordinate forestry policy objectives in a coherent manner (Chaytor 2001). But also at the national level, cross-sectoral approaches are essential. Due to environmental and macro-economic interests (e.g. agriculture, other forms of land use and land tenure) other sectoral policies have increasingly started to affect forests. Traditionally strong ties between the actors in the forest sector, established already for a long time, are now no longer exclusively forming the forest policy arena (Montalembert 1995; Høgl 2000). An active exchange of information and communication between all stakeholders is essential, so that the forest-related issues in the European Union can be addressed in an adaptive manner – learning from the achievements and making improvements where shortcomings or gaps exist.

Another reason for the need to improve cooperation and networking in forest sector communication is the opinion of the general public. In successful forest communication, on the one hand one promotes sustainable forest management in order to acquire a social license to operate, and on the other hand one tries to fulfil the aims of society by using forests to support the resolution of societal problems (Karvonen 2004). The effect of those communication activities on the general public's image on forestry is under question here, because whatever the actual state of Europe's forests, it is the public's view on issues that counts just as much in forest policy and business. A number of studies (Demoskop AB 2000; GALLUP 1999; Rametsteiner 1999; Rametsteiner et al. 1999; Rametsteiner and Kraxner 2003; Valtonen et al. 1997) show that the public often has controversial opinions. Results of a study on the public's perception of the forest industry by the Directorate General Enterprise of the European Commission (2002) indicate great ignorance on the part of the public and an image which leaves room for improvement, particularly as regard respect for the environment, the modernity of the sectors studied and their importance regarding employment and job attractiveness.

It has to be noted, however, that one has to be careful with interpreting the results from these studies. According to a countrywide study in Germany – which can most likely

be generalized to some extent to the European level – performed by Suda and Schaffner (2004) the general public’s opinion is also controversial in the sense that it incorporates conflicting views. What does this mean? At first glance it seems that the public is alarmed by the “bad news” on the state of Europe’s forests in the media. However, when personally experiencing the forest during for example a walk in a nearby forest, the opinion is very positive. The forest gives the walker “a good feeling”. Although the public has negative reactions upon seeing/hearing about forestry (measures) in the media, these reactions are rare when experiencing forestry measures during a walk in the forest. The overall opinion then is that such measures are necessary for management of the forest. In short, a dichotomy exists between the reactions on media-information and the reactions as a result of personal experience. However, the general public apparently does give much thought to these conflicting reactions. It is also important to note here that the public does not associate forestry measures with the forest industry. The general opinion on forest industry is, as stated in the studies mentioned earlier, rather negative. Interestingly, the general opinion on wood as a raw material for construction, decoration etc. is very positive. This has led Suda and Schaffner (2004) to relate this to a concept called the “slaughter-house syndrome” – more about this paradox, and strategies for communicating messages to the public later on in this report.

Although the forest sector is taking action to improve its image, the problem is that more recent efforts to improve forest management are usually reflected in public opinion only after some time and only if adequate efforts have been made to communicate these measures to the public (Rametsteiner and Kraxner 2003).

## 1.2 Policy Background

A policy background for the increased attention for co-operation and co-ordination in forest communication can be found in the following documents:

### 1.2.1 United Nations Forum on Forests – fourth session (2004)

#### *Resolution 4/1: Forest-related scientific knowledge<sup>1</sup>*

3. Requests the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to facilitate joint action to further improve linkages and to improve communication and networking between scientific, forest policy and civil society entities.

At its 10th meeting, on 14 May 2004, the Forum had before it a summary of the multi-stakeholder dialogue, which states the following on communication<sup>2</sup>:

30. Stakeholders and Governments highlighted the importance of further collaboration between the public sector and major groups, particularly forest professionals and women forest professionals, especially as regards networks and communication systems. It was recognized that greater dialogues enhances decision-making processes. Governments were called upon to work with stakeholders to undertake joint action planning and implementation at all levels.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Forum on Forests: Report on the fourth session (6 June 2003 and 3 to 14 May 2004). Economic and Social Council: Official Records, 2004; Supplement No. 22 [E/2004/42 E/CN.18/2004/17]  
<sup>2</sup> UNFF Chairman’s report on the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue [E/CN.18/2004/CRP.2]

## 1.2.2 Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

### *Vienna Declaration*<sup>3</sup>

14. Identify key cross-sectoral issues, actors and interactions and, on this basis, establish a dialogue to seek joint solutions; the resulting policy choices should both further sustainable forest management and sustainable development as a whole,
15. Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships at the international and national level between governments, governmental organisations, civil society including nongovernmental organisations and the private sector,
16. Use national and sub-national forest programmes as a means for effective inter-sectoral co-ordination, reflecting a balanced decision making process,
17. Take forest-related decisions based on science, take measures that support and strengthen research and increase interdisciplinary research,
18. Continue the fruitful pan-European co-operation with all partners, especially with UNECE/FAO and Environment for Europe/PEBLDS3, and increase co-operation with other regional forest processes,
19. Further develop co-operation among countries with different socio-economic situations, especially with regard to Central and Eastern Europe.

### *Vienna Resolution 1 – Strengthen Synergies for Sustainable Forest Management in Europe through Cross-sectoral Co-operation and National Forest Programmes*<sup>4</sup>

5. Work towards an improved understanding of cross-sectoral issues at the pan-European level, identify key issues, actors and interaction to be considered in the regional context and enhance co-operation and dialogue to pro-actively seek solutions,
6. Enhance inter-sectoral policy co-ordination by establishing or improving mechanisms:
  - a) For regular communication between the forest sector and other relevant sectors to increase the exchange of information and consultation,
  - b) To strengthen collaboration with these sectors and to develop inter-sectoral agreement on common priorities,

## 1.2.3 European Union

### *Forestry Strategy for the European Union*<sup>5</sup>

In Article 2-f of the EU Forestry Strategy, the need is expressed:

<sup>3</sup> Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. 28-30 April 2003, Vienna, Austria. Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration. European Forests - Common Benefits, Shared Responsibilities.

<sup>4</sup> Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. 28--30 April 2003, Vienna, Austria. Vienna Resolution 1: Strengthen Synergies for Sustainable Forest Management in Europe Through Cross-Sectoral Co-Operation and National Forest Programmes.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission (2005). DRAFT COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT In support of the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy.

“to improve co-ordination, communication and co-operation in all policy areas with relevance to the forest sector within the Commission, between the Commission and the Member States, as well as between the Member States”.

Then, Article 10 emphasizes:

“the benefits of effective co-ordination between different policy sectors which have an influence on forestry and of co-ordination at Community level”.

The document also emphasizes:

“the important role the Standing Forestry Committee, the Advisory Committee on Forestry and Cork and the Advisory Committee on Community policy regarding Forestry and Forest-based Industries have in this context, making use of these committees as ad-hoc consultation for providing expertise for all forestry-related activities in the framework of Community policies”

### 1.3 Research Task

This study, a survey on European communication organisations and networks in the forest sector, is the result of one of the proposals made at the Forest Academy Finland forums and it serves to find out how the challenges – discussed below – are presently being met, and what gaps remain.

In external communication (between the forest sector and the rest of society) at the European level, there is a need to create more visibility for forests and forestry in the overall societal discourse, highlighting the potentials related to forest sector development. This implies increasing the role of communication as a policy strategy, a broad understanding of the forest cluster and cross-sectoral approaches.

In internal communication (between actors within the forest sector) at the European level, a major challenge lies in getting to know each other better. This need inspired the slogan for the forum: “It’s too late to form a network when you need one” (H. Mildh). The participants also felt a need to build a stronger organisational infrastructure for networking in communication and for exchanging views on best practices. Moreover, the need to understand Europe as a whole and not only as a sum of its parts was recognised.

In external communication at the national level, proactive and strategic communication is needed, with careful selection of target groups, messages and communication means. However, finding commitment for joint action in campaigning for the image of forestry and wood was a common concern for the participants. This could be promoted by, for example, adopting an overall communication strategy in forest policy (e.g. in National Forest Programmes).

In internal communication at the national level, challenges were identified related to communication and relations between the public and private sectors, to extension and networking in private forestry, and to creating an advisory role for forest authorities. In particular, a need for establishing permanent institutions or networks for joint communication efforts was recognised. At the individual level, there is a need to develop personal communication skills and to educate forestry professionals in managing not only trees but also people (Hellström 2004a).

To summarize the major challenges:

- Bringing forests onto the agenda of general discussion;
- Increasing public demand and social acceptability for sustainable forest products and services;
- Strengthening international networking and co-operation within the forest sector;
- Activating communication and cultural change within the forest sector.

Although cooperation and networking in communication most often begins at the level of individual organisations and countries – where main responsibility for communication issues also lies – stronger cooperation and networking in communication issues may be needed at the European level. In particular, utilising and strengthening existing networks, and finding synergies between them may create added value.

The project aims to:

- Survey existing cooperation and networks in forest-based communication in Europe (e.g. missions, projects) – “Who is doing what?”
- Identify gaps in meeting the challenges identified – “What is not being done?”

This study aims to do so at different levels, namely:

- Level of policy making: 1) At the European level, and 2) at the national level;
- Type of communication: A) externally, between the forest sector and other sectors of society, and B) internally, between various actors within the forest sector.

This distinction is explained further in the matrix in *Table 1: Four levels of communication for the forest sector* in the Framework and Methodology chapter.

In more detail, the following questions form the basis of this survey:

1. Which organizations are the major actors in the forest sector at 1) the European level and 2) the national level?
2. What are the characteristics of these organizations’ communication activities – A) inter-sectoral as well as B) intra-sectoral?
  - a. What are their reasons for communication (goals, objectives)?
  - b. What are their messages?
  - c. What are their target groups?
  - d. How do they communicate (tools, methods)?
3. Responsibility for communication: is there any cooperation in communication efforts between organizations in the sector? If so, what are the characteristics of these structures (e.g. common goals, messages)?
4. Problem situation: what kind of difficulties are these organizations experiencing in the field of communication (e.g. reaching target groups)? This question relates closely to the goals for communication.
5. What do the organizations regard as challenges in communication and what kind of improvements do they suggest?

In the following chapters an attempt is made to answer these questions. In the Discussion and Overview chapter the answers to the questions above are analysed and related to the theoretical considerations, followed by a Conclusions chapter and a Recommendations chapter.

In this study the main focus lies on the forest sector core, i.e. those (inter)-governmental organizations dealing with forest issues, forest owner associations, forest (based) industry federations, and other related interest representation groups. In addition, cooperation structures between and networks of these organizations will be examined. Although it can be argued that other actors, e.g. environmental NGOs, are also relevant and should also be taken into account, they will not be examined in detail in this study. Lack of time and resources are one reason. Another reason is that one has to draw the line somewhere in respect to defining the forest sector. It is however hoped that in the nearby future a similar study will be conducted, focusing on environmental NGOs cooperation and networking in forest communication.

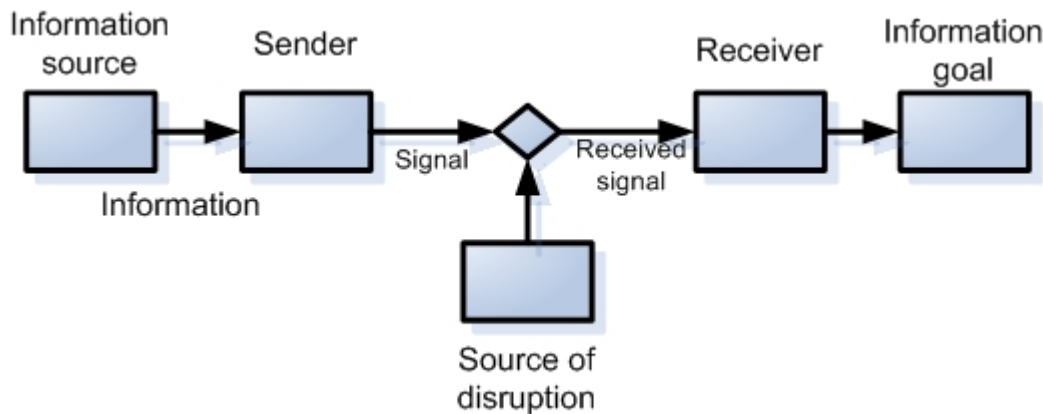


## 2 Theoretical Aspects of Communication

### 2.1 Communication processes

#### 2.1.1 Basic communication process

What is communication? Communication is a rather general term, a term so often used that we can fill libraries on the topic. Many definitions exist, depending on the author's discipline and which aspect he/she wants to put on the foreground. A simple model of communication identifies four elements: a source, a message, a medium, and a receiver (Dretske 1999). The message is the information flowing from the source to the receiver through a channel/medium. This elementary communication model views communication as the dissemination of information. The focus is on the flow of information and this information is seen as objective, thereby implicitly focusing on the denotative side of meaning. Shannon and Weaver's (1949) conceptualization is somewhat more elaborate, as they divide their model into five elements, namely: a source of information, a sender, a source of disruption, a receiver, and the goal of the information sent (Fig. 1). Communication is seen here as a linear process, which can be described as follows: The source of information motivates a sender to send a signal on its way. This signal is led further through a channel and is picked up by a receiver, who adjusts the signal in such a way that it can realize the information goal. The most important element in this process is the source of disruption, which is the mechanism/circumstance causing adaptations to the signal, which were not intended/foreseen by the source of information. Central problem here is thus the principle of *encoding* and *decoding* – the adequate handing over of information from sender to receiver (Lenke et al. 1995: pp. 18-20; in Schein 2004).



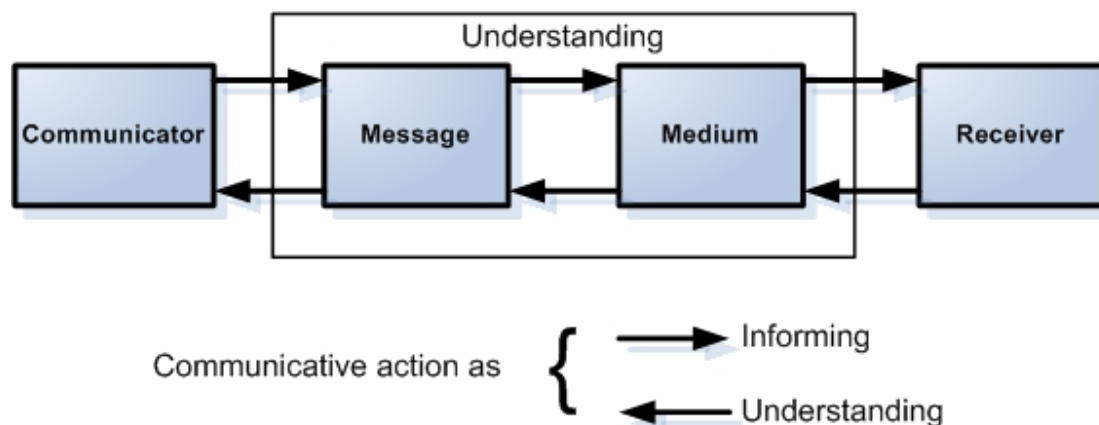
**Figure 1** Basic communication process (Shannon and Weaver 1949)

#### 2.1.2 Communication as social action

Merten (1977) sees communication as a, in principal, social phenomenon, which possesses three basic elements: a communicator, a stimulus, and a receiver. By using the attribute "social" it is possible to exclude all non-human interaction (e.g. between computers). Decisive for the concept "social" is, in addition, the fact that behavior is relative - actions stand in relation to each other. Human communication can be explained further with the description: *social action with an intentional character*. This describes relations that are intentionally aiming at very specific objectives; communicative action out of a specific interest. Two different characteristics can be assigned to such a communication-interest: communicative action can be either content-related, directly

resulting from interest or being determined by these interests, or situation-related, not directly resulting from interest. These basic elements of a communication process do not yet imply, however, that communication is already taking place (Schein 2004). In his basic model (fig. 2) Merten (1977) gives the four factors that form the skeletal structure of communication:

- Someone, who wants to “say” something
- The message itself, conveying that what the sender wants to make the receiver believe, do, or feel.
- The medium, through which the messages flow from sender to receiver.
- Someone, at whom the message is aimed



**Figure 2** Basic model of a (successful) communication process (after Merten 1977: in Burkart 1995; Schein 2004).

A well-known theory, originating from the field of mass-communication, is the classic “Magic Bullet Theory”, which is characterized by faith in the strong, direct and uniform influence of mass-media on the individual receiver. The communicator is directly appealing to the addressee, if necessary via a communication channel, and if the process of transmission is successful, the act of communication has to have some sort of effect – in order to reach a certain response, one only has to find the right stimulus. The latter remark on stimulus-response refers to an active communicator who addresses a more or less passive public; in connection with the diffusion of scientific findings it is oriented at processes of immediate, one-sided knowledge transfer as they are outlined in the linear model as described by Dretske (1999) and Shannon and Weaver (1949).

Other definitions of communication specify in more detail what actually is being sent from sender to receiver, namely: *Communication is the transmission of information, ideas, attitudes, or emotion from one person or group to another (or others)* (Van Ruler, 2004). In relation to the above Van Woerkum et al. (1999) also distinguish between intended and unintended communication. Intended communication is an attempt to inform someone by means of formulating and sending a message. It is an intentional, directed activity. The source wants to cause a certain effect with(in) the receiver. With unintended communication the source, unintentionally, sends a signal from which the receiver gets information.

### 2.1.3 Communication as a two-way process

Grunig (2001) went further in his conceptualizations of the communication process and distinguished between one-way and two-way models of communication, and between asymmetric and symmetric communication. He claims that one-way models are always asymmetric, and that two-way communication can be either asymmetrical or symmetrical. Asymmetric is defined as communication in which a one-way, linear causal effect is predicted and evaluated. Symmetrical communication then means “the use of *bargaining, negotiating, and strategies of conflict resolution* to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of both the organization and its publics” (Grunig 2001). Symmetrical communication also indicates that each participant in the communication process is equally able to influence the other. However, it remains unclear what then the difference between one-way and two-way asymmetrical communication is (Van Ruler 2004). Apparently no strict line can be drawn and the difference between one and two-way asymmetrical communication is relative. Two-way asymmetrical could be seen as communication where the receiver’s reaction (the message sent back) on the information received from the sender has a limited effect (compared to the effect the first message from the sender had). For one-way communication there would be no (or very limited, hence the gray zone between “limited” and “very limited”) effect if the receiver chooses to react.

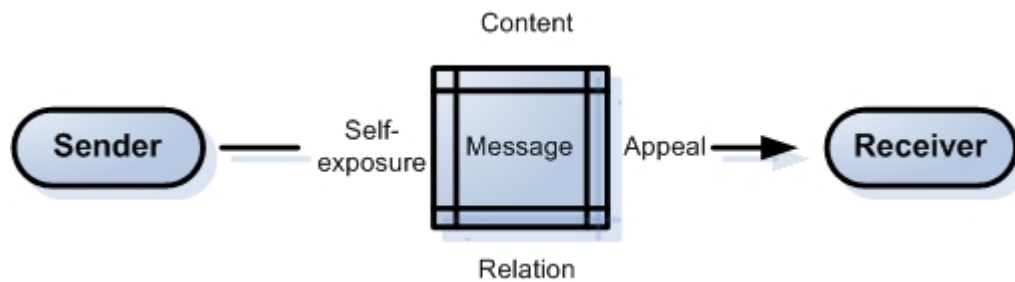
In addition to one-way and two-way (unidirectional and bidirectional) communication, one can also classify communication processes based on the number of participants. Four classes can be distinguished here: 1:1 (one sender, one receiver), 1:N (one sender, multiple receivers), N:1 (multiple senders, one receiver), N:M (multiple senders, multiple receivers). A final way of classifying communication processes is based on the time-relation; synchronous communication means that the communication partners are communicating at the same time, asynchronous communication means that there is a time gap in the information exchange between partners (Schein 2004; after TU München 2003).

Communication is not static, but a process, which involves at least two people. Communication as being a truly, double-sided (reciprocal) occurrence can best be understood as social interaction, which comprises both an action as well as a reaction. According to Burkart (1995) only an exchange of interests, completed in both directions can be seen as a true communicative process. Watzlawick (1969; in Schein 2004) then describes human communication as interaction based on five axioms:

1. One can not, not communicate
2. Every communication has a content and a relational aspect
3. Communication uses digital and analog modalities
4. Communication runs either symmetrical or hierarchical (complementary, asymmetrical)
5. Communication courses of action are differently structured

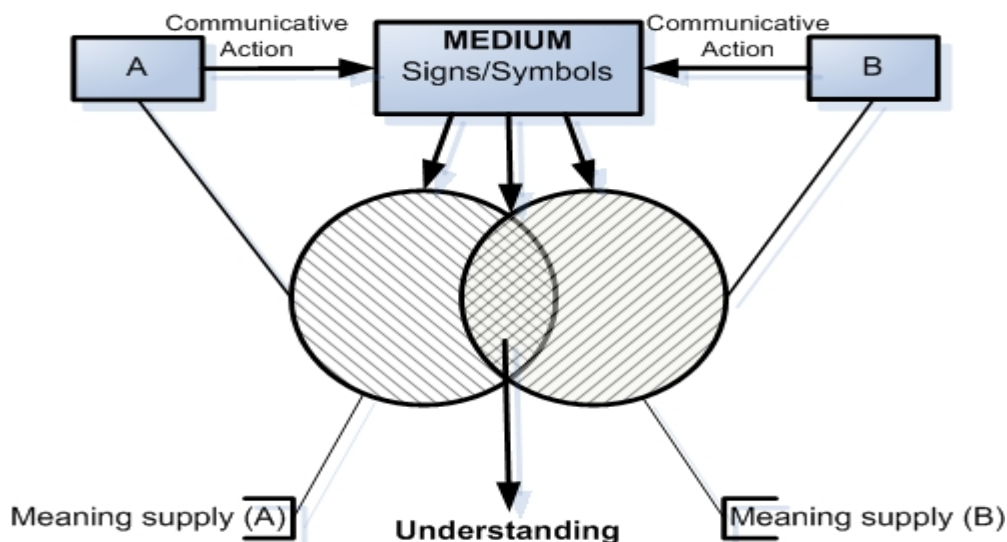
According to Watzlawick (1996) the content aspect conveys the information – what I am informing about – and the relational aspect points out how to perceive this information – what one’s relationship to someone else is.

Besides a content aspect and a relational aspect, every message also contains a piece of self-exposure (I-messages) – what I show of myself – and an *appeal-side* – what I want to achieve. The latter tries to influence, either hidden (manipulation) or out in the open (Taller 2003, Schein 2004) (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3** Four aspects of a message (in Taller 2003, Schein 2004; after Sandner-Rauch 1994)

In order to gain understanding, a set of signals symbolizing the same objects (things, circumstances, views, ideas, representations, etc.) for the respective communication partners is required. The things and their meanings represent, to the people engaged in a communication process, the subjective reality of their past experiences. When a shared meaning-basis is present then an area of agreement, or common ground, comes into existence where both understanding and communication can take place (Fig. 4) (Schein 2004, after Burkart 1995).



**Figure 4** Shared meaning basis for communication – or symbolically mediated interaction (after Burkart 1995, Schein 2004).

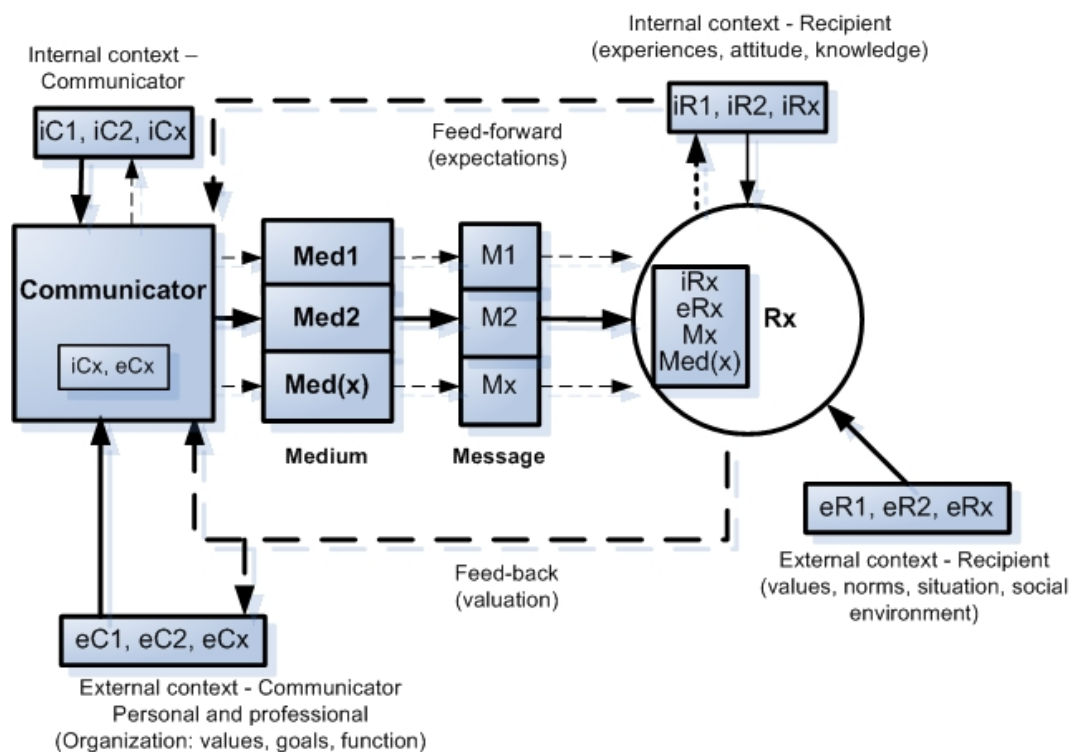
#### 2.1.4 Creation of meaning

As stated earlier, basic theories view communication as an attempt by a sender to produce a predefined attitudinal change in the receiver, i.e. a change in the (connotative) meaning of the situation as perceived by the latter. One well-known theory of this type is the Two-Step Flow theory (Van Woerkum 1999), which stipulates that mass media inform certain people (the opinion leader), who on their part influence the meanings perceived by other (influence flow).

However, communication should also be regarded in context of the process of meaning-creation (Rosengren 2000). Meaning involves questions such as how people create meaning psychologically, socially and culturally, how messages are understood mentally, how ambiguity arises and how it is resolved. The crucial question, however, is what kind of meaning of whom is created by whom and what implications does this have in terms of

interpreting the world (Littlejohn 1983, pp. 95–113; in Van Ruler 2004). Meaning can be explained as the *whole way in which we understand, explain, feel about and react towards a given phenomenon* (Rosengren 2000, p. 59). The relation between meaning-creation and the images people have is obvious. In modern societies people get their information through the media, which gives them images that may be true or untrue, right or wrong, but in any case influence their opinions strongly. The one who creates the images – getting the widest possible acceptance among the public – holds a powerful position (Karvonen 2004).

Furthermore, besides the given information and/or influence also the *internal context* – mainly determined by the addressee’s experience, knowledge and attitudes – and the *external context*, which is primarily defined by the specific situational and social setting, influence communication (Pregernig 2000; Innes 1999).



**Figure 5** Pentamodal model of communication (based on Merten 1999; in Krafft 2004)

The process of perceiving and processing information takes place interactively and multi-dimensionally (Merten 1999). In his revised model of communication (Fig. 5), Merten (1999) identifies, besides internal and external contexts, also two reflexive, selective working structures. Before the actual communication, the information supply is pre-selected by means of a feed-forward structure. Expectations can also be influenced, or even created, by additional meta-communication, and then also influence the resulting effect of the information supply on the recipient. The feedback structure constitutes an ex-post reaction possibility for the recipient. This structure lags the actual communication process; the reason why the effect of this indirect modality rather applies to future communication processes. Regarded on the long run, the effects are consequently altered through their own functioning (Krafft 2004).

The most important lesson to be learned here is the necessity for the information to be *relevant*. The message has to have meaning for the recipients, in order to be perceived in

the first place (cf. Burkart's (1995) *shared meaning-basis*). Therefore the information has to hit upon the receiver's set of values, thereby triggering his/her curiosity, interests, emotions, willingness-to-act, etc. Basically one has to bear in mind that the "naked or objective" contents of the message is set behind the "value content" – which the receiver connects to, or should connect to, the message – of the message

For communication to succeed, the recipient should be able to connect the message to his existing frame of reference in order to be able to deliberate on the message contents-wise. At the same time, connotations, notions of causality, and opinions, which are aroused within the receiver by the message, should be able to be tied up to the content of the message. Deliberation on the message either leads to confirmation or modification of thinking-patterns, or it activates a reorientation of thinking-patterns (for example through a so-called "light-bulb-moment"). If links to the receiver's frame of reference fail altogether, then the message is not picked up. In case contradictions between deliberated content of the message and the own set of beliefs occur, then a number of mechanisms to process or repress are activated (e.g. cognitive dissonance) (Suda and Schaffner 2004).

### *To reach or not to reach*

To begin with, it is by no means certain that the receiver even receives the message that is meant for him. This is called *selective exposure*: receivers are only 'exposed' to a limited number of communication means – nobody reads all the newspapers.

If he receives it, he may not notice it – *selective perception*: there may be dozens of posters displayed at a train station, but even if someone is standing in front of these posters for half an hour while waiting for a train, he may not notice all of them.

If he notices the message, he may choose not to read it – *selective attention*: we don't read all of the articles in a newspaper or watch all the television programmes. We don't even open all our mail. Even if the message is received, noticed and read, there is no certainty that the receiver will agree with it – *selective acceptance*. And finally, if someone agrees we still cannot be sure that he will react in the way the sender intended.

As an example let's look at an advertisement to encourage people to stop smoking. Some smokers may never see it, because they read another newspaper. Even if they read the right newspaper they may simply not notice the advertisement. As people do not like unpleasant news, many smokers may choose not to read it even if they do see it. If they read it, they can still think it is untrue (people are very good at protecting themselves against unpleasant or upsetting information) and if they believe it is true, they still can decide to go on smoking (Jones-Walters 2000).

In close connection to the above stand Habermas' (1976) claims of validity. He suggests that in making any utterance (be it a statement, a questions, an accusation or whatever) a speaker raises four 'validity claims' - that is to say that there are four levels at which the speaker can be challenged by any listener. Firstly, the challenge can simply be whether or not the utterance is meaningful. Secondly, the truth of the utterance can be questioned. Any utterance (including orders or questions) will assume certain facts about the world, and one can ask if those factual presuppositions really are warranted. Thirdly, the speaker's right to say what he or she says (or to speak at all) may be challenged. For example, one may question a person's authority to make a particular assertion, or his or her right to make a request or issue an order.) Finally, the sincerity of the speaker may be questioned (so that the speaker may be accused of lying, being ironic or teasing, for example).

To sum up, communicating ones messages is not as simple as it seems. First of all, the subject of the message has to interest the receiver. Secondly, the receiver has to be able to

place the message into his/her own frame of reference – the message should not cause conflict with opinions, views, and attitudes within the receiver’s frame of reference. Thirdly, the receiver has to be able to receive and understand the message without any difficulties. Fourthly, the message can be disturbed along the way, and can be influenced by external contexts (e.g. the environment of the receiver). Vice versa, all four factors above also apply to the original sender (or communicator), which in turn can make it difficult for a reaction of the original receiver to be conceived by the original sender.

### **2.1.5 Public relations, lobbying, and “joint” two-way communication**

Communication is important for obvious, and already mentioned, reasons; in relation to forests, forestry, and forest industry those reasons are based on the fragmentation of forest policy at the EU level, the need for a social license to operate, and the need to act in concert with societal demands. Every organization nowadays uses the word communication quite frequently, be it in slogan-form – “we have to communicate with our customers” – or in actually written-down communication strategies. But what is it that these organizations really mean when using the word communication? Do they really mean a two-way symmetric social interaction, where understanding takes form through a shared meaning-basis and the connecting of messages to frames of reference? Applied to the forest sector such communication would, in its ideal form, be represented by a forum for communication in which all the major stakeholders (all relevant policy-makers, forest owners/managers, forest industry, and NGOs) participate, and commence in a process where they learn to understand each other’s values and interests, where they learn from each other, create joint meanings, and start to share a common frame of reference.

It is the author’s impression that the latter is not always meant when organization use the word communication. An important defining factor, if not the most important factor, is the goal of the communication; what the organization wants to achieve. The two concepts that are discussed below might come closer to reality.

Public relations and lobbying are conceptualized within the framework of communication theory. Communication is defined as management of the exchange of messages, and its purpose is to assist in the management of the entire organization by integrating the parts of the organization into the whole. Communication by results means that communication is a resource used as a strategic tool to achieve organizational goals (Åberg 1989; in Jaatinen 1999). Communication has some crucial functions in the organization and different forms of communication serve these functions. Public relations and lobbying are two forms of communication both principally serving the functions of creating the profile, and scanning and informing the external and internal constituencies of the organization. Public relations concentrates on communicating and building and maintaining relations with members of the organization and external key publics such as the media, citizens, associations, issue groups, and companies, but also other groups on whom the organization has consequences or whose action has consequences on the organization. Lobbying is essentially interaction between organizational representatives and governmental and parliamentary decision-makers, but also other groups participating in or trying to influence political decision-making. The publics of lobbying are determined by the object of influence, whereas the focus is on the organization when publics of public relations are determined. Public relations may be used to assist in lobbying, e.g., in advocacy advertising, mobilizing grass-roots level, and shaping citizen opinion (Jaatinen 1999).

Although lobbying research has its origins in public relations theory in which lobbying is conceptualized as the creating and maintaining of relations with politicians, lobbying, in practice, consists of the means that are used to achieve a certain objective, a certain kind of decision. A political decision-maker, even if he is an intermediary of opinions, is just a point in the process of decision-making. Thus, lobbying can be defined as *efforts to influence political decision-making* (Jaatinen 1999). To influence political decision-making thus hints at an unequal (asymmetric) relationship between lobbying organization and its subject, the political (sub)system. Which, in the author's opinion, distinguishes it from true symmetric two-way communication processes where people engage in a learning process, joint fact-finding etc. (see later on in this paragraph).

In current discussion of public relations practice on both sides of the Atlantic, public relations is variously described as a marketing discipline, as a communication practice, as an exercise in the development of mutual understanding, or in terms of one of the specialised practices, which make up the practice, such as public affairs. In corporate communications public relations are described as *the use of communications techniques to build a positive public image* or under the general heading of organisational communication (Moss 1999: p. 150). Public relations is not a very widely used name for the field in Europe, not in practice and certainly not in science. In many countries it is even "not done" to talk about public relations (especially the northern, the north-western and central European countries). Moreover, the term public relations (if ever used) is more and more being replaced by such terms as "communication management" and "corporate communication". Still, in an international context many people continue to use the Anglo-American term "public relations", though there are strong reasons to believe that the term does not mean the same in Anglo-American countries and European countries, showing the different roles of what is internationally known as "public relations". The common US-oriented approach to the field focuses on public as "publics", while in some European countries at least the roots of its science and practice seem to be much more based on public as "public sphere" (van Ruler and Verčič 2001). For a long time communication research relevant to public relations was on the effects of mass media, public opinion, attitudes and persuasion, effects of information campaigns and – to a lesser extent – interpersonal and organizational communication (Moss 1999: p. 19).

Van Ruler and Verčič (2001) discuss a number of definitions of public relations, for instance the one given by Heath (2000): *The new view of public relations assumes that markets are attracted to and kept by organisations that can create beneficial relationships*. Hutton (1999) described the new paradigm of public relations, aimed at *building relationships with publics*. He also states that the proposed definition of public relations – *managing strategic relationships* – is said to be breaking with some long-standing ideas that communication is the bedrock of public relations and that *communication is a necessary but no longer sufficient foundation for public relations*. However, according to Van Ruler and Verčič (2001) even public relations researchers find it difficult to distinguish communication and relationships. In the light of the European social-scientific tradition the confrontation of communication with behaviour makes no sense, communication being a form of behaviour and at the same time being the essence of any kind of relation. A more interesting and promising point of discussion seems to be what is meant by communication and relationship, instead of having to choose between these two



According to Suda and Schaffner (2004) the art of *public relations* lies in the use and combination of symbols and messages in such a way that the available sets of values and frames of reference are activated so that the actual content of the message is evaluated positively. Relating the above to forestry, one can say that practically everyone ties images, presumptions, and opinions to the concept of forest. In principle, every person connects his/her own individual image-"world", which is based on multiple experiences and information, to forests. Information on forests therefore is in principle connectable. Decisive here is, however, whether or not this information is relevant from the viewpoint of the individual; how the information is reflected upon and valued in the consciousness of the own image-"world".

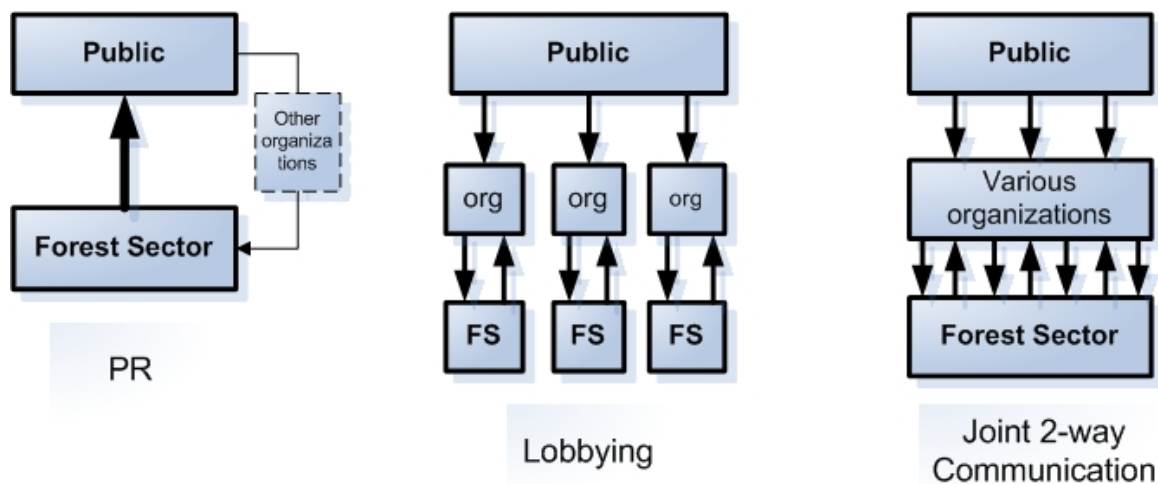
Focusing on public relations; the question is whether such instrumental campaigns will actually lead to a long term and permanent change in attitudes and behaviour towards nature. If a permanent change in behaviour is what is desired than it is going to take more than one message going from sender to receiver. In many circumstances more interactive approaches to communication, such as visits, phone-calls, workshops and round-table meetings could be more effective. Jones-Walters (2000) stated the following concerning nature conservation issues, but in the authors opinion it also holds true for forestry:

The problems concerning nature conservation are too complex and involve too many groups for a single organization to solve them on its own. In many countries formal consultation of all stakeholders is now part of the process of developing conservation policy and conservation action plans. But even these formal consultation processes are not satisfying for anyone if the various stakeholders merely put forward their own views. Each group will try to strengthen their position and promote their own interests by making use of formal procedures of appeal and protest. Such conflicts and frustrations can be avoided by trying to introduce more proactive and imaginative ways of thinking and a collaborative approach to problem solving. Consensus development through stakeholder participation is a promising new trend that takes into account the interactive character of the communication process.

In relation to the various forms of communication, Hellström (2005; personal communication) distinguishes three general ways in which the forest sector communicates:

1. Via public relations (PR). This form of communication mainly consists of campaigns to inform the general public on forests, forestry and the forest-based industry, and to change the image the public has of the forest sector.
2. Via lobbying. This form of communication has a more bilateral character, in the sense that it can be characterized by the efforts of the forest-based industry umbrella federations to influence EU policy makers. The bilateral aspect can be explained as follows: not the forest sector as a whole, but one (or a small group of) umbrella federations are interacting with one (or a small group of) policy institutions (e.g. one or two national ministries or at the EU level, Directorates General). Another word that could be used here is *negotiation*, however, it can also be argued that negotiation refers to something wider than lobbying, in the sense that negotiation can take place without a clear objective to influence policy. For example, negotiation between various actors within the forest sector to come to joint statements. However, the author believes that including negotiation as a fourth category (between lobbying and joint, two-way communication) would complicate the discussion, and that the concepts of lobbying and joint, two-way communication are sufficient to describe the communication processes taking place.

3. Via joint, two-way communication. As stated earlier, for the forest sector such communication would take the form of a forum for communication in which all the major stakeholders (policy-makers from all relevant policy fields, forest owners/managers, forest industry, and NGOs) participate, and commence in a process where they learn to understand each other's values and interests, where they learn from each other, create joint meanings, and start to share a common frame of reference. An example of this type of communication can be found in Finland, where the so-called Forest Forum for Decision-Makers has been active for some years now.



**Figure 6** Three general forms of communication (after Hellström 2005; personal communication).

The above basically comes down to the following. In a field with many actors, the forest sector has a host of relationships to maintain. Communication with all target groups has to be based on the understanding that external and internal context, frames of reference, meaning creation, the relationship between sender and receiver, etc. strongly affect the result of that communication.

## 2.2 The elements of communication

### 2.2.1 Communicator

In the communication models discussed earlier the information flows from sender to receiver. The sender is thus the initial communicator. In two-way communication processes – where information flows both ways – sender and receiver are only positions, which are taking in interchangeably. In this context it is therefore more logical to name the person or organization that sends information as the communicator. In two-way communication processes everyone is thus a communicator.

All the actors identified in this study can be regarded as communicators. What one has to keep in mind, however, is that strictly speaking organizations do not communicate but the people in the organization. This complicates matters when analyzing an “organization’s communication” because then one would have to begin with the person’s conducting the organization’s communication. Being sender **and** receiver of information, a communicator has to be analyzed as being a person performing a role in an environment (Wilson 1997). In addition, persons can perform many roles and thus private and professional interests have their impact on communication as well. Just to give an

example: networks built up over the years by a person while working for an organization can serve both personal and professional goals, and often these goals are so interlinked that it is difficult to tell them apart.

Therefore, in order to make the actor analysis workable the concept of communicator will be used to describe the organization, and not the individual.

### 2.2.2 Message

According to the theories discussed earlier, a message is nothing more than a signal transmitted by a source to a receiver. The more elaborated models then specify such a signal as information, knowledge, attitudes etc. (van Ruler 2004). Another aspect of messages is the distinction between intended and unintended, as referred to by Van Woerkum et al. (1999). But what kind of information is then conveyed in “a message”?

Decision-makers rely on many types of information, and not primarily on technical, formal, or scientifically validated knowledge. Other kinds of information, like own experiences, the stories told and the images and representations used in discussions, and intuition subconsciously play an equally important role (Innes 1999). Problems like incomplete information, or not being able to find certain information, are normally dealt with by assumption-based reasoning (Lipshitz and Strauss 1997). Prior experience and intuition then become even more important than they already are.

In this study, message means message as used in everyday speech. Basically that comes down to a combination of facts and “emotions”. To give an example: when spreading the word that *family forestry* is sustainable its propagators use facts (e.g. the percentage of PEFC certified family forests) as well as emotion (e.g. pictures of happy families working in a beautiful forest).

### 2.2.3 Target groups – relation groups

With regard to target groups, an interesting classification is made by Van Woerkum et al. (1999). They identify target groups for communication based on the character of the relationship they have with the communicating individual or organization (Fig. 4). This model also applies to actors in the forestry sector. When an actor in the forestry sector has to make a decision, his environment is functionally heterogeneous, the different influence groups – or relational groups – each have another function for the actor:

Conditional relation-groups are groups that can be, to a high degree, essential for the existence of an organization. In a commercial sense it can be a mother-company or the whole concern keeping the daughter-company or part of it alive, or in a public sense it can be the government that does or does not give permits.

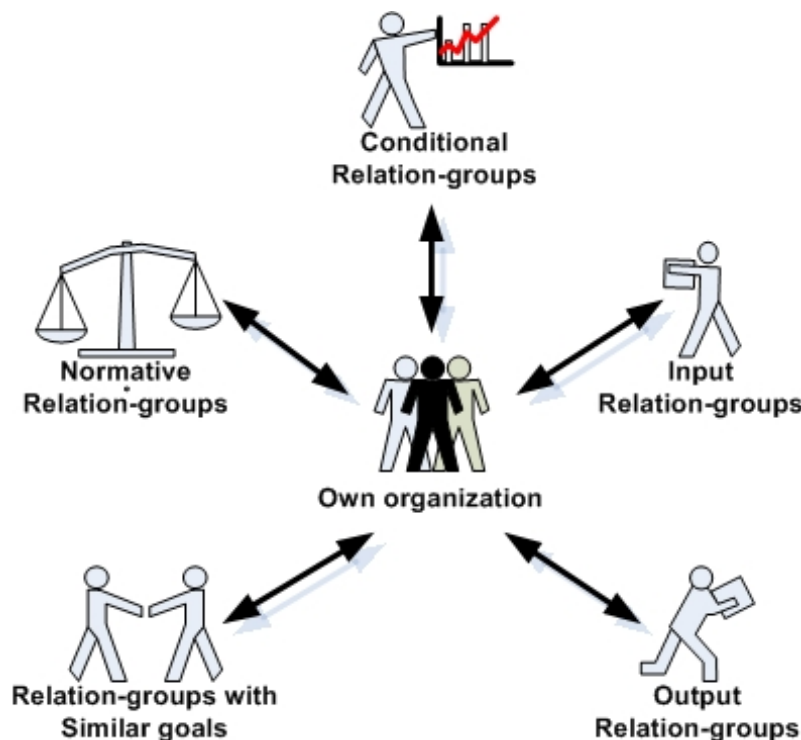
Input relation-group: are groups that are important because of the input they provide for the functioning of the organization. This input may consist of finances, manpower, knowledge or facilities. Research institutes and government extension services belong to this relation group.

Output relation-groups are groups that purchase or use products from an organization.

Relation-groups with similar goals are groups that are in more or less the same branch, either as a rival or in a co-operation relationship.

Normative relation-groups are groups that express their opinions on the organization in question and by doing so influence the opinion of others with regard to the forestry enterprise in question. This can be certain media or organizations with media influence – e.g. political parties, societal groups (like environmental organizations), labour unions, etc.

As these groups constitute a heterogeneous mix of relationships to the actor in question (the central organization in Figure 7), they resemble different communication goals for the central actor, and thus also require different approaches. In short: specific messages to and methods for reaching specific target groups.



**Figure 7** Different influencing relation-groups (free interpretation after: van Woerkum et al. 1999).

All these groups influence the decisions an organization (or person for that matter) makes. Different forms of information flow among all these groups, ranging from scientific information to people's personal beliefs, opinions and experiences.

#### 2.2.4 Communication medium

In order to be able to interact communicatively in the first place one needs an expression, a "thing", through which the interaction between two communication-partners takes place, the medium (Schein 2004). Burkart (1995; after Pross 1972) distinguishes between primary, secondary and tertiary media. Primary media are formed by *human elementary contact* that include, besides verbal, also all non-verbal aspects (e.g. body-language, facial expressions etc.). Secondary media are those media that need a device on the production side, not at the reception side (e.g. brochures, newspapers, or letters). Tertiary media then are those media that need a device on both the production side as well as on the reception side (e.g. telephone, radio, TV, email). In addition one could also distinguish communication-spaces (landscape, climate, city, buildings,...) and communication-objects (table, flower,...) as being non-verbal media (Burkart 1995; after Graumann 1972). What is meant with the latter two, is that all that surrounds us can be perceived as medium and therefore also represents meanings. Furthermore this model implies the important aspect of understanding – only when conveyed information results in understanding one can name a process communication.

Summarizing, one can say that communication media provide a certain framework in which then the signals, respectively signal combinations, operate and are symbolically

used for what is meant. Through this set of signs and meanings, human communication can also be described as symbolically mediated interaction.

## **2.3 Communication seen from a “Diffusion of Innovation” perspective**

### **2.3.1 Innovation and information**

Literature on innovation – and especially its diffusion – may provide us with some useful insights into the matter of the uptake of information, in the sense that the process of adoption of innovation is actually similar to the process of information flow. Innovation in general denotes successful introductions of novelties (cf. new ideas, new messages, new information). As for most other rather general concepts, no commonly agreed definition exists. What is understood by the term innovation varies considerably between broad and narrow definitions (Rametsteiner 2000). According to Schumpeter (1934: in Rametsteiner 2000), four types of business innovation have to be distinguished:

- The introduction of a new product or a new quality of a product, i.e. not known to the customers (product innovation);
- the introduction of a new production or procedural method in the industry sector (procedural innovation);
- opening up of a new market or of a new resource source;
- implementation of a re-organization.

The first type of innovation, the introduction of a new product or a new quality of a product, resembles the adoption of new information closest. Therefore, this type of innovation will be taken as a starting point.

Just like information (messages), innovations do not get accepted all of a sudden but are gradually adopted (if adopted at all). The process of accepting innovation can be described as follows:

- Phase 1: Becoming aware of innovation
- Phase 2: Interest
- Phase 3: Contemplating the application of the innovation
- Phase 4: Testing (where possible on a small scale)
- Phase 5: Acceptance and evaluation (when the evaluation turns out negative a problem solving process can follow)

If we then take a look at the general problem-solving model, which is often used to describe the decision-making process, we can make a connection between the process of problem solving and the process of accepting innovation (Van Woerkum et al. 1999).

- Phase 1: Becoming aware of a problem
- Phase 2: Determining and analyzing the causes
- Phase 3: Possible solutions
- Phase 4: Choosing the most suitable solution
- Phase 5: Applying the chosen solution
- Phase 6: Evaluating the result of the solution

People don't see any problems when they are not suspecting a solution and they are only becoming interested in solutions (and innovations) when they suspect a relationship with a underlying, up till then often ignored, problem.

### 2.3.2 Diffusion of innovation

As mentioned earlier in the discussion on communication processes, social surroundings take in a prominent place in an individual's decision-making. The information one receives on innovations either comes from the own social surrounding/group (for instance forestry entrepreneurs) or is in any case discussed there. Prominent people from the own group – the opinion leaders – play an important role; the rest of the group values their opinion. Whether or not people decide to adopt an innovation depends on a number of factors, which will be discussed later on. Individuals can be classified according to their adoption behavior related to innovations. One common scheme to classify the diffusion process and its participants is (Rogers 1995: in Rametsteiner 2000):

1. Innovators – the venturesomes
2. Early adopters – the respected local opinion leaders
3. Early majority – the deliberate followers
4. Late majority – the sceptical
5. Laggards – the traditional

Recognizing that decisions are the outcome of societal processes, and that decisions are embedded in broader cultural, social and political value systems, Van Woerkum et al. (1999) distinguish two processes with regards to the diffusion of information in decision-making:

1. The social surrounding that influences the processing of the message by the individual; and
2. Through professional communication obtained knowledge that can be passed on to others (diffusion)

An advantage of diffusion is the efficiency; when something is passed on to the innovators, it will automatically reach the rest of the group. However, there are some difficulties:

- Some groups within a population are too closed and the message will not get through.
- When people reject an innovation, it can be that the innovation was not good, but that the sender of the message does not consider that option and in the future will exclude the “rejecters” of his target group.

Furthermore, when spreading new information, policy or innovative measures we may encounter some biases (Röling 1988), like:

*Pro innovation bias*: the conviction that something new is always good. This is off course not the case, and an innovation can best be given form in negotiations with different groups with different visions.

*Scientific culture biases*: adherence to the myth of objective, value-free science, preference for technical solutions as first-order solutions, and advancement of the scientific method and scientific rationality as preferred logic.

*The social system as a unity:* In the diffusion approach the only important difference in a social system is the pace of adoption; there are fast and slow adopters. However, this way of “uniform thinking” – or thinking in stereotypes – does not consider the fact that even the people in one social group are very diverse.

As a reaction on the “pro innovation bias” a number of criteria were formulated which have to be met by an innovation before being accepted by people (Van Woerkum et al. 1999):

- Posses a clear advantage
- Be compatible with existing values, experiences and needs
- Posses a low complexity
- Triability (easy to try)
- Be visible

But these criteria do not just cling to an innovation. The new knowledge (innovation) has to be developed with these points in mind. This goes, of course, best when the relevant parties (i.e. the end-users/forestry entrepreneurs) are intensively involved in the development.

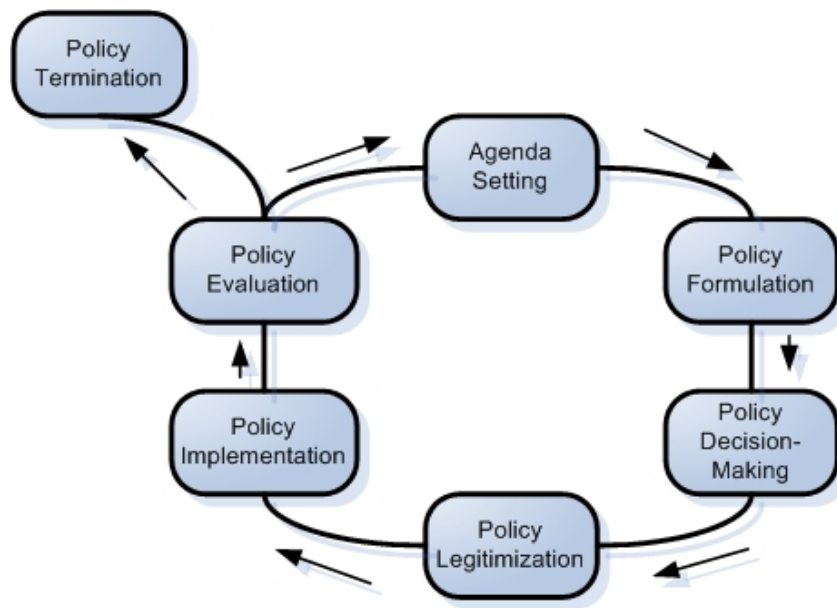
Whether or not people wish to adopt an innovation (or information) depends on a variety of factors. Rogers (1995: in Rametsteiner 2000) summarizes the results of existing literature on the characteristics of adopter behaviour into the following categories:

- Socio-economic characteristics;
- Attitude towards credit, education, commercial orientation;
- Personal values;
- Favourable attitude towards education and science, change, ability to cope with uncertainty, rationality, non-fatalism, higher aspirations, intelligence;
- Communication behaviour;
- Interconnectedness with the social system, more active information seeking, change agent contact, cosmopolitaness, opinion leadership, exposure to interpersonal communication channels, knowledge of innovations.

## **2.4 Communication as a policy instrument**

### **2.4.1 Communication and networks**

A nowadays often-used approach for describing the way in which decisions are made in policy processes (see Fig. 5 for a model of the policy process) – and therefore a strong indicator for the character of communication between actors – is the Advocacy Coalition Framework, or ACF (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993).



**Figure 8** The Ideal Type Policy Cycle (based on the phases proposed by Ellefson 2000 and Jann and Wegrich 2003)

The ACF does not assume that actors are simply driven by economic or political self-interest. Instead, the model of the actors' belief system enables the integration of value orientation, professional beliefs, as well as individual and institutional self-interest (Hogl 2000). An advantage of this theory is that it takes into account that actors within a specific policy domain can be organized into coalitions (Advocacy Coalitions) composed of individuals from a variety of organizations – both governmental and private – who share beliefs and act in concert. Advocacy coalitions seek to translate their beliefs into policy using various strategies and instruments, such as litigation, lobbying elected officials, commissioning research, influencing public opinion, etc. (Elliott and Schlaepfer 2001). Elliott and Schlaepfer (2001) also argue that the concept of political networks offers a number of additional insights into how actors interact in policy subsystems and how such systems are structured, which can add a predictive element that is missing from the ACF. Nowadays, policy processes are approached from a dynamic and complex view that emphasises a process shaped by multiple relations and reservoirs of knowledge, where the political context, the actors (networks, organisations and individuals), the message, and media all exert influence. As Glück (1997: p. 5) explains:

*In pluralistic democracies, instead of a uniform decision maker, there are a multitude of political actors with varying empowerment, interests and objectives . . . . The new paradigm of policy planning focuses on governance processes which take place in policy networks or bargaining systems.*

Although the actors in the political system differ with regards to their duties, interests, values, power etc., they do have in common that can not manage without the others; they are linked together in a “policy network”. A network can be seen as an informal institution with relatively permanent relationships and interactions between public and private actors who strive to realise common gains (Scharpf 1993, in Glück and Humphreys 2002). A policy network then can be regarded as the institutionalised relations between the individual actors within a certain policy field (Glück 2002).



The network concept draws attention to the interaction of many separate but interdependent organizations which co-ordinate their actions through interdependencies of resources and interests. Actors, who take an interest in the making of a certain policy and who dispose of resources (material and immaterial) – required for the formulation, decision or implementation of the policy – form linkages to exchange these resources. The linkages, which differ in their degree of intensity, normalization, standardization and frequency of interaction, constitute the structures of a network. These "governance structures" of a network determine in turn the exchange of resources between the actors (Börzel 1997). According to Glück (2002) the concept of clientelism is also important for understanding the relation between politics and the "public". Clientelism can be defined as a complex chain of personal bonds between political patrons or bosses and their individual clients or followers, actually to arrange "who gets what" (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith, 2002). A similar construction is described by the concept of parentela-relationships, which can be defined as the co-operation of an association/federation/group etc. with only one political party. In this constellation an influential political party is prepared to intervene in the political-administrative process in favour of the group(s) with whom it is allied more closely. In return the group (association) is able to gain a secure power-basis within the various fractions of the political party. As major political parties are aiming at a "center" position in the political-ideological scale, the "parentela-constellation" is posing an increasingly difficult task, both for political parties as well as for the associations involved (Glück 2002).

Related to network theories is the concept of social capital. Consensus in literature is growing that social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes 1998). Social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively. Important features of social capital, such as trust and reciprocity, and a willingness to share information, ideas, and views, are developed in an iterative process (Woolcock and Narayan 2000). In short, one can say that social capital consists of three elements: trust, network, and shared views.

#### **2.4.2 Communication between formal policy makers and bureaucracy**

The relationship between government (i.e. representatives or associates of political parties) and high level bureaucracy (i.e. heads of ministerial departments) is characterised by differing "rationalities". Election victory and appointment to politically important offices are the main objective of the political functionary's (i.e. prime-minister, minister, secretary of state etc.) "political rationality". They formulate political objectives in their election-programs, which are aimed at gaining support for their respective party. Administrative or economical rationality is aimed at reaching these objectives by means of political planning. Political functionaries thus expect their high-level civil servants to support them in choosing the appropriate measures to reach these political objectives.

The political-administrative system is thus divided into two sub-sectors, one of which is primarily politically interested in the development of decisions, whereas the other's interest is based administratively oriented. This twofold specialisation requires a special way of communication between the two sub-systems. This communication is made more difficult by the fact that there is no clear barrier between the two sectors. The presentation of the governmental budget by the minister of finance, for example, requires a large amount of administrative preparatory work. On the other hand, civil servants also have to think "politically" in the process of departmental budget-development.

This communication is facilitated, however, by the fact that the leading positions in parliaments and governments as well as within the administration are appointed with individuals, who are both open for political as well as for administrative rationality. Top-level civil servants may often be members of the same political party, or at least sympathise with the same political ideology, as their political counterpart and thus enjoy the political functionary's trust. Thus, especially after a change of government, a new minister will try to ensure that top-level positions of the administrative apparatus are appointed with "appropriate" individuals (i.e. following the same political ideology). The ideal of the "loyal and impartial" civil servant is thus becoming a farce.

The fact that in many countries especially top-level civil servants cannot easily be removed from office makes it more difficult for a newly appointed minister to carry out major staff-changes in his/her ministry. In such a framework political functionaries have to resort to functional re-organisation of tasks (i.e. re-organisation of ministerial structure or within ministerial departments).

The relationship between politicians and civil servants in the public administration can also be explained with the so-called "principal-agent-model". The "principal" is seen as the "master", who can expect from his "agent" the fulfilling of tasks in his name and order. This social relationship can be viewed as an exchange-relationship within which both actors (principal and agent) are aiming at their respective benefit. The principal expects his orders to be fulfilled, whereas the agent is receiving rewards for his services. There are, however, several specifics about this relation:

- The principal has the right to discipline the agent (e.g. demission, wage-reduction), if a task is not fulfilled satisfactory.
- The agent has no sanctionary instruments towards the principal.
- The principal is depending on the agent's actions.

Within bureaucracy the politician is facing the problem of assessing the civil servant's skills and services accordingly ("moral risk"). The agent may possibly – and based on rational-choice theory "certainly" – try to blur information to his own favour ("shirking"). Another problems turns up when the principal is appointing an agent. He risks of ending up with an agent who is not up to the task ("error in selection").

According to the theory of selective bureaucratic action the key to the solution of both problems lies in the principal's *trust* in his agent. While trust may be a risk-investment by the principal, as there is never absolute sureness that trust will not be abused, it is also a resource which can be acquired by the agent if he fulfils his tasks (principal's orders), but which can be easily lost if he gets caught in the process of deceit. Deceit in this context must not go as far as actual corruption or fraud, but could also mean actions by the civil servants which are knowingly against the political functionary's interests (e.g. diversions from the election program). Trust constitutes an informal relationship between principal and agent, which is of mutual benefit. The agent has the advantage of working relatively uncontrolled and autonomously (i.e. preserving institutional interests) whereas the principal enjoys the advantage of low costs for control and surveillance (Ottitsch 2002).

Concluding, the influence of administration on the formal policy makers is high, thus making it justifiable to gather both groups government/parliament and bureaucracy in one term "policy makers" sensu lato.

### **2.4.3 Communication and policy making**

As a policy instrument communication can serve several goals. An important function of communication is informing about other policy instruments. Communication can also

have an important agenda-setting function. This means that we want an issue to catch people's attention and even initiate a public discussion. However attention or discussion does not mean that specific plans or ideas concerning this issue will be liked. Agenda setting is functional at the beginning of a policy process when policy with respect to a problem has yet to be developed. Such wide discussion is not desirable when detailed plans have already been made and nothing can be changed. Communication is also frequently used to ask support for the implementation of policy. All of these roles are called the *instrumental use* of communication. Communication campaigns are usually set out to achieve one or more of these goals. Such campaigns aim to generate understanding of and support for existing or planned policy. They can also set out to change the behaviour of specific groups (for example landowners, farmers, citizens or tourists) in support of policies or plans by persuading these groups of the benefits of the policy and of the behaviour changes.

Communication as a policy instrument has a positive image and an optimistic feel to it. Why not simply tell people 'the truth' and influence them towards an internally motivated, voluntary change of behaviour? The previous paragraphs have already shown that this is not as easy as we would like. A point to remember is that if – for whatever reason – a group of people has serious objections to a specific policy or plan, communication at the end of the policy-process will not make them like it or accept it.

An interactive approach might more successful. The essence of interactive policymaking is to organise and facilitate a process in which stakeholders - all those who are involved in or affected by a policy plan - negotiate and learn their way towards policies that are acceptable to all of them. Involving all these groups in policymaking is a challenging task. The basis for interactive policymaking is the recognition of mutual dependency. All stakeholders have to recognise that they need 'the others' to reach their goals. This leads to involving these others in policy development (Aarts and Van Woerkum 2000).

**Box 1** Four guidelines for constructive negotiations (Aarts and Van Woerkum 2000)

Constructive negotiating is a very intensive and difficult process, which needs time, patience, communication and negotiation skills, and interpersonal skills as well. This might sound discouraging. However, one should realise that the ideal negotiator does not exist. To conclude, below four practical guidelines for constructive negotiations are given (Aarts and Van Woerkum 2000):

1. Separate the people from the problem. This becomes easier when you get to know people personally.
2. Focus on interests, not on positions. Be clear about what you want and, even more importantly, about what you definitely do not want. Try to get these things clear for the other stakeholders as well.
3. Invent options for mutual gain. The best way to find such options is to search for them together with other stakeholders
4. Insist on using objective criteria. In order to create a clear, honest and commonly accepted climate for negotiating, these criteria should be discussed beforehand with all stakeholders involved.

### 3 Framework and Methodology

#### 3.1 Framework

Both communication with the wider forest cluster (see Figure 9) and communication with society at large will be considered as external communication. Concerning target groups, an important distinction is whether both the communicator (sender) and the target group (receiver) are within the forest sector (internal communication), in contrast to the situation, where they represent different sectors (external communication). Another distinction is whether one is looking at the national level or at the international (i.e. European level). Table 1 gives the framework for the four resulting fields of analysis.

**Table 1** Matrix of communication levels for the forest sector (Hellström, 2004b)

	Communication and networking between actors from different <b>European</b> countries	Communication and networking between different actors within each country <b>nationally</b>
<b>External</b> communication between the forest sector and other sectors of society	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>Internal</b> communication between various actors within the forest sector	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>

The aim of the project was to identify existing communication and cooperation networks in each of the four categories of the framework, and identify gaps in present communication networks. In short: “Who is doing what?” and “What is not being done?”. In addition, four case-countries studies were conducted: Austria, Finland, Latvia, and the United Kingdom.

The reasons for choosing these countries are:

- Austria – a Central European country with a long forestry tradition, a forest and forest industry cluster with a high importance for the whole economy, and a large exporter of forest products.
- Finland – a Northern European country with a long forestry tradition and a strong and economically very important forest sector, and a large exporter of forest products.
- Latvia – a new EU accession country and a large exporter of forest products.
- United Kingdom – a large market (importer) for forest products.

An analysis of communication in the forest sector should start with an identification of the major actors, because communication is about relations and interaction.

One of the problems in making a distinction between the various actor groups is formed by the group, named below as forest policy makers. There is namely some ambiguity when defining who are policy makers and who are not. Formally speaking, policy making is confined, at the national level, to the Parliament; at the EU level to the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament; and at the UN level to the General Assembly and the Security Council. Practically speaking however, policy making – the whole process from agenda setting to evaluation of policy – is not confined to these selected

bodies, it is a process that involves many different actors and relations, all of which influence policy making to a great extent (Ottitsch 2005; personal communication). Think for instance of the paradigms discussed in the Theoretical Background Chapter, like policy network theory, the Advocacy Coalition Framework, clientele and parentela relations, principal-agent theory. Because of the high influence bureaucracy has on formal policy makers, it was chosen here to include also bureaucracy (administration, civil servants or whatever one wants to call them) into the group of policy makers.

- 1) Forest policy makers<sup>6</sup>: (a) in government and parliament, (b) in administration
- 2) Forest industry
- 3) Forest owners / -managers and contractors
- 4) Forest scientists
- 5) Forest user / interest groups (e.g. NGOs representing recreation, conservation etc.)
- 6) Society at large
- 7) “The Media”

If we try to locate these actors on a visual map, than we can distinguish three groups (Fig. 9). A central circle containing:

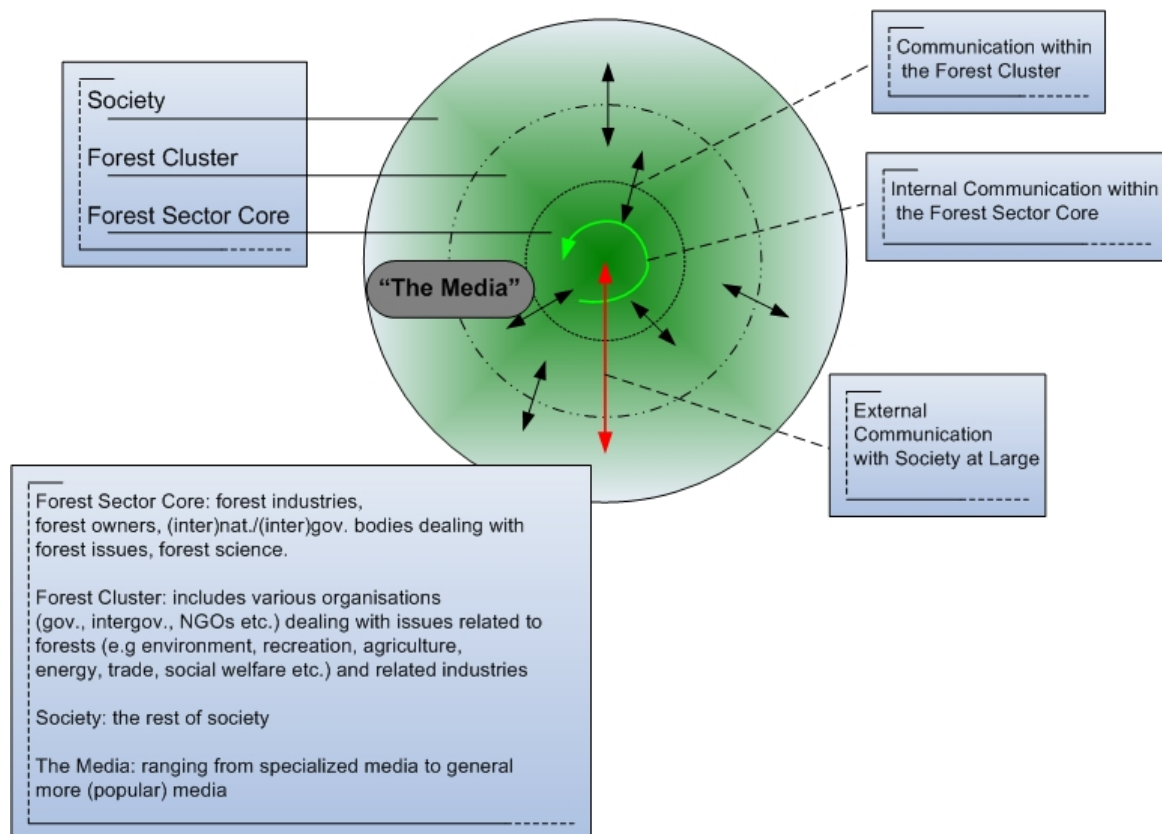
- the *forest sector core* (forest industry, forest owners, national/international governmental bodies dealing with forest policy, state forestry administrations, and forest science) [This is the so-called “**class C**” in the framework presented in Table 1]
- is surrounded by (or fall into) a larger circle, called the *forest cluster*, containing a wide array of interest groups, and international organizations with an interest in forests (e.g. environmental, agricultural, recreation, trade, social welfare organisations) and related industries, [This group, together with society at large, represents the communication in **class D** of the framework]

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<sup>6</sup> Concerning the European level, formal policy making takes places at the Council, Commission and Parliament. The Directorates General form the administration (bureaucracy). As discussed earlier, both governing body and bureaucracy will be considered policy makers *sensu lato*. Concerning UNECE/FAO the situation is a bit more complex: the two relevant bodies, the UNECE Timber Committee (TC) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), are governmental bodies that provide a forum for the discussion of policy issues and may, in fact do, provide guidance and advice on policy directions, which actual policy makers and their advisers at the national level may or may not listen to. The Timber Branch, then, is merely the secretariat to the TC and EFC, and their subsidiary bodies and provides the “evidence”, in the form of studies, reports, statistics etc., on which this guidance and advice may be formulated. In the formal sense the TC and EFC are thus no policy makers, in the practical sense, they will however (based on their perceived influence) be considered policy makers *sensu lato*.

The MCPFE is different again. It has developed into a forum where national policy makers themselves, i.e. ministers (rather than just their advisers who attend the TC and EFC) meet and, through the resolutions adopted, try to coordinate their policies at the European level.

Where policies are formulated, i.e. in Brussels or at the national level, depends on how the principle of subsidiarity is applied. Mostly, forest policy is still set at the national, sometimes, sub-national, level (Peck 2005; personal communication).



**Figure 9** Communication processes in and between the Forest Sector Core, Forest Cluster and Society at large.

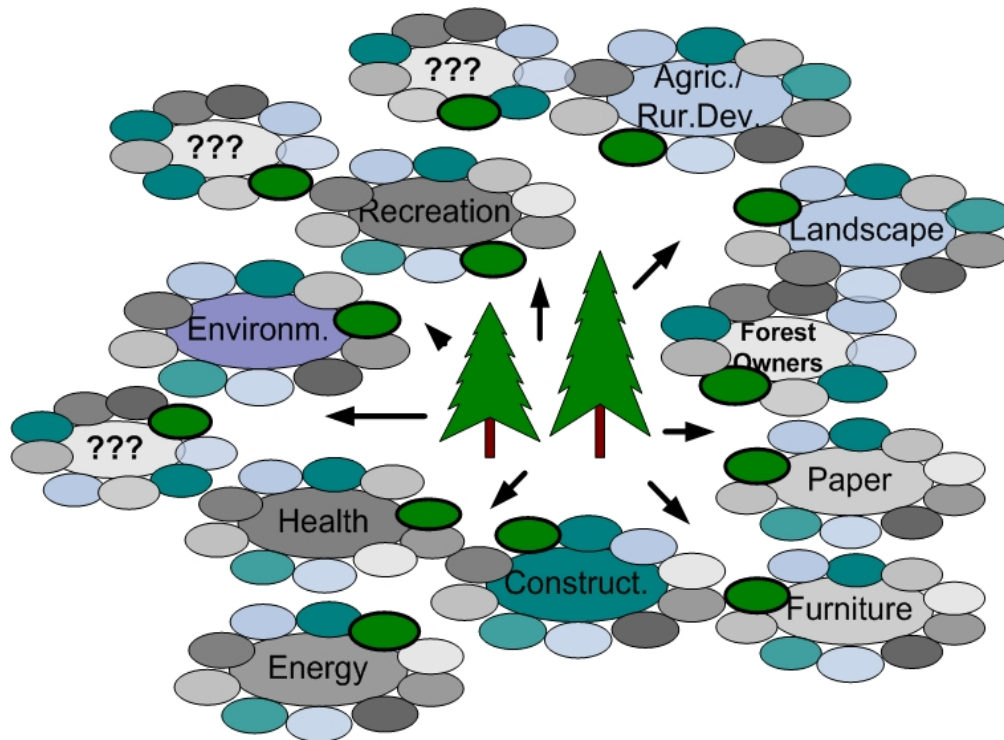
In analyzing communication – communication in general, or e.g. one’s own communication strategy – one should ask oneself the following basic questions:

1. What is it one wants to achieve with communication (goals)?
2. With/to whom one wants to communicate? (target groups)
3. What is it one wants from whom? (specific goals)
4. What does one want to communicate to whom? (focused messages)
5. How does one want to communicate to whom? (medium)

Three different categories of communication processes are identified in Figure 9: communication within the forest sector core (internal communication), communication within the forest sector, and communication with society at large (external communication). When talking about the forest sector in this study, for both reasons of clarity and time, the forest sector core is meant. If all the actors in the forest cluster would have had to be a) selected and b) analyzed, that would have been a) prone to too much subjectivity (which organisations would still or would not anymore belong to the larger forest cluster depends on the person making the assessment and is hence quite subjective) and b) would have cost too much time and resources.

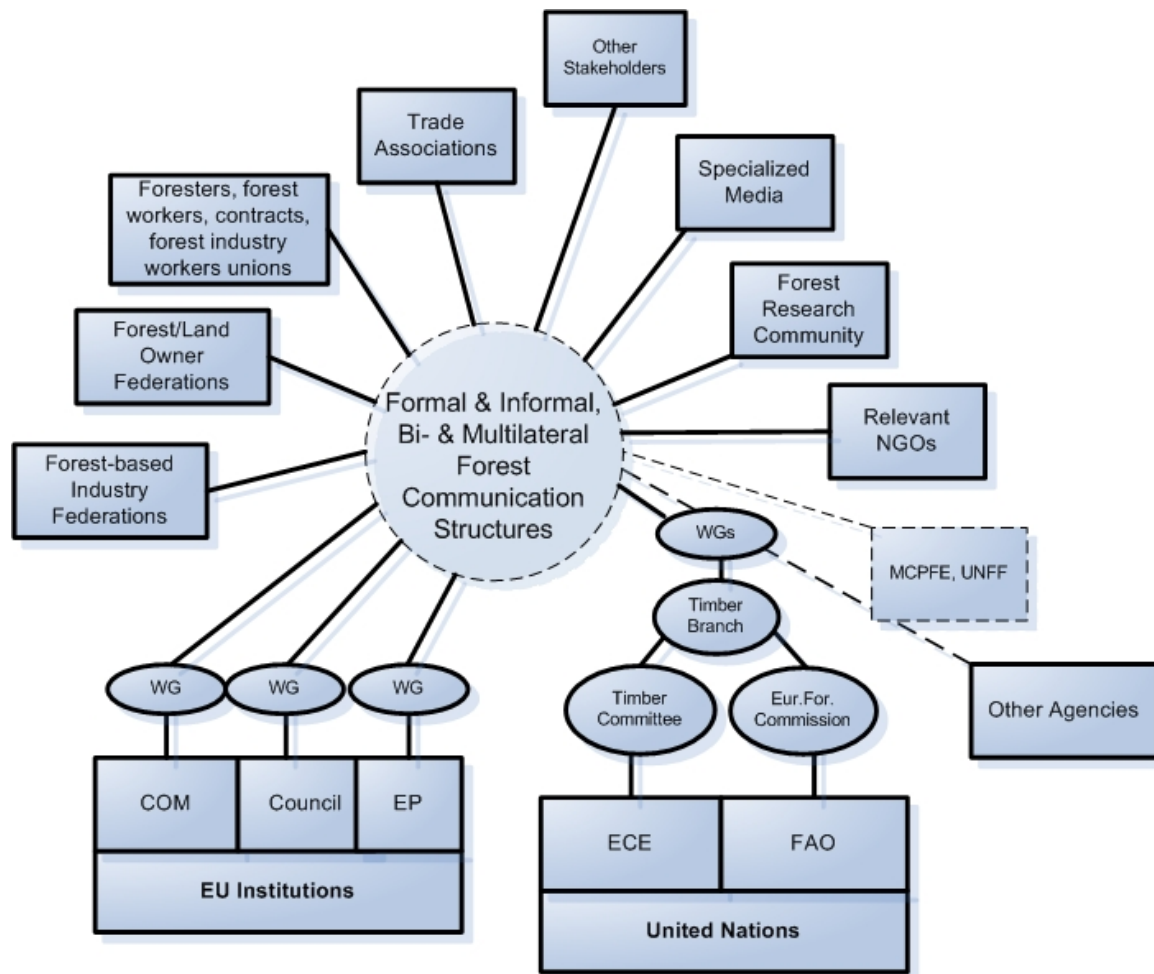
Although it may seem relatively obvious for some organisations whether or not they belong to the forest sector core, it might not be that straightforward for others. There are organizations for which forest issues are not their sole competence, but for which forest issues are only a (minor) part of their daily affairs – although these organizations can be still very influential in the forest policy process. For that kind of organizations the concentric model in Figure 9, with a strong emphasis on forestry and forest industry,

might seem inappropriate. In the light of the multiple roles forests play, an “umbrella” model of functions, which vary in importance and characteristics per country and region, might describe their situation better (Fig. 10). Especially when EU institutions are concerned the choice whether or not to include them in the forest sector core can be contested. This has to do with the fragmentation of EU policy concerning forestry. For example, forestry issues are dealt with at a number of Directorates General (DG) at the European Commission (COM), with the result that forestry forms only one among many policy interests at the DGs in question. From the viewpoint of a DG at the COM the model presented in Figure 9 might not even be suitable to describe their position properly. During the assessment of communication in and of the forest sector it became apparent that the concentric model presented in Figure 9 actually does represent reality quite well. It seemed that the forest sector core at the European level is mainly formed around the themes forestry and forest-based industry, and that the most relevant actors (i.e. EU institutions, UNECE/FAO, stakeholder federations) have a relatively strong focus on forestry and forest-based industry as well. A compromise that had to be made to Figure 9 concerns the borders between core, cluster and society at large, for these borders are not always very clear.



**Figure 10** “Umbrella” model of the multiple interests in forests, of which forest sector interests are only few among many.

Before making the actual assessment of existing structures of negotiation, cooperation, communication etc. at the European level, an overview of relevant types of organizations and their possible communication structures might make it easier to get an idea of what the forest sector at the European level (again, the so-called “class C” in the framework of Table 1) looks like organization-wise (Fig. 11).



**Figure 11** Preliminary overview of organizations most relevant for forest communication.

### 3.2 Methodology

Information was initially collected through expert interviews, both face-to-face on-site interviews as well as telephone interviews, and literature and internet research. The group of interviewees consisted of:

- Representatives of the most relevant Directorates General of the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Enterprise and Industry, and DG Environment),
- Representatives of forest-based industry federations (CEI-BOIS and CEPI), and forest owners associations (CEPF),
- Representatives of the Forest Communicators Network (FCN),
- Representatives of the UNECE/FAO Timber Branch, who also are (were) connected to the secretariat of the FCN.
- Other relevant experts in forest sector communications (e.g. from IUFRO, MCPFE, and the European Forest Institute).
- Country experts for Austria, Finland, Latvia and the United Kingdom.

After the completion of that round of interviews a questionnaire was sent out to a larger group of experts in forest sector communication, based on the suggestions made by the interviewees during the first round of interviews. The majority of the people to whom the questionnaire was sent were members of the FCN. The interviews were semi-structured



(Krott and Suda 2001) and the questionnaire consisted of a combination of open and closed questions, and ranking – ascribing a value (Burgess 2001). The questionnaire also served to guide the interviews. The statements made in this report stem from the expert interviews (see Appendix I for a list of the interviewees), the email survey (see Appendix II for the questionnaire), and from literature. The results and discussion chapters present the results from the interviews and survey. In the discussion chapter the results are also related to the theory discussed in the theoretical considerations chapter. The conclusion chapter is the author's interpretation of those results. This report is concluded with recommendations.

As described in the Research Task chapter, the following questions formed the basis of the survey, and hence the basis of the interviews:

1. Which organizations are the major actors in the forest sector at 1) the European level and 2) the national level?
2. What are the characteristics of these organizations' communication activities – A) inter-sectoral as well as B) intra-sectoral?
  - a. What are their reasons for communication (goals, objectives)?
  - b. What are their messages?
  - c. What are their target groups?
  - d. How do they communicate (tools, methods)?
3. Responsibility for communication: is there any cooperation in communication efforts between organizations in the sector? If so, what are the characteristics of these structures (e.g. common goals, messages)?
4. Problem situation: what kind of difficulties are these organizations experiencing in the field of communication (e.g. reaching target groups)? This question relates closely to the goals for communication.
5. What do the organizations regard as challenges in communication and what kind of improvements do they suggest?

## 4 European Level Communication

### 4.1 Major Actors

#### 4.1.1 European Union – relevant actors at the European Commission

##### *Introduction to EU actors and other relevant institutions*

At the European level the EU institutions are very important, especially the European Commission; i.e. Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry (DG ENTR), Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), and Environment (DG ENV). However, the EU has a relatively weak position, due to the non-existence of a policy framework for forestry. As a result of this weak position, it is necessary for the Forest-based Industries (FBI) to communicate with organizations outside the EU policy circles.

In addition to the European Commission (COM), a number of international organisations are active in issues related to forestry. These organisations serve several wide-reaching purposes, such as:

- To inform the public on forest-related issues, including the environment and sustainable development;
- In some cases to lobby and inform policy-makers in the process of legislating the industry;
- To monitor, analyse and report on forest-and timber-based activities;
- To communicate and represent the interests of forest-based industries regionally, nationally and – in some cases – internationally.

Among the most active in Europe are:

- The Forestry division of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Statistical division
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Timber Committee

And to a certain degree also:

- World Bank - Forests and Forestry division
- The International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)
- Asian Development Bank (ADB)

However, as stated earlier, the COM is most relevant. At the COM the following key policy areas are under consideration in relation to the forest-based industries in Europe:

- Sustainable development (i.e. climate change, energy, waste, IPPC- IPP, EMAS - Eco-label, biodiversity)
- Enlargement
- Competition
- SME's
- Internal Market
- Research and development
- Health and Safety
- E-commerce
- Trade

*Communication strategies of EU Institutions*

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2002, the Commission adopted a communication on a new strategy for its information and communication policy<sup>7</sup>. The proposal foresees a more active role for the Member States in disseminating information on the Union. The Parliament's Plenary discussed the Commission's proposal on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 2003. In 2004 the Commission published a Communication on Implementing the Information and Communication Strategy for the European Union<sup>8</sup>. The Commission has now proposed that a review be scheduled for 2005 with all the parties involved in order to carry out an exhaustive evaluation of progress achieved and to determine any new lines of action that are required for an enlarged Europe.

For the European Commission as a whole the overall communication activities are more or less coordinated by the Directorate General Press and Communication, which has the mission to:

- Inform the media and citizens of the activities of the Commission and to communicate the objectives and goals of its policies and actions;
- Inform the Commission of the evolution of opinion in the Member States.

In order to accomplish its mission, DG Press:

- Co-ordinates the activities of the Representations in the Member States;
- Centralises all contacts with the media;
- Seeks to ensure a coherent approach to communication and information issues within the Commission. This involves contacts with Directorates-General and Services within the Commission that have information units responsible for sectoral information. The DGs responsible for external relations provide information to citizens of third countries including information for the general public in applicant States.

As stated directly above DGs have sectoral information units. Due to the lack of a clear policy framework on forests/forestry at the EU level no specific DG has the sole competence to deal with forest issues, and so forest issues are “spread out” over a range of DGs (i.e. DG ENTR, AGRI, ENV). This means that there are also no specific information units on forestry. At best, communication on forestry issues taken up by a specific DG is run through that DG’s Communication (or Information, PR, and so forth) Unit before leaving the confines of the DG. In this respect, however, it has to be mentioned that the people interviewed at the different DGs themselves stress the importance to look at a higher level, the Commission (COM) as a whole, in stead of focussing on the level below, the various DGs of which the COM is made up. For this study, however, it seems relevant to make some kind of a differentiation concerning actors at the COM, in order to represent the fragmentation of forest policy at the COM.

The DG with apparently the strongest focus on communicating forest issues is the DG ENTR, i.e. its Forest Based and Related Industries Unit (FBI Unit). Focussing on the

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<sup>7</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2002). Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on an Information and Communication Strategy for the European Union. [COM(2002) 350 final/2]

<sup>8</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2004). Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Implementing the Information and Communication Strategy for the European Union. [COM(2004) 196 final]

competitiveness of the FBI Sector they are in close contact with the relevant FBI umbrella organizations (or federations, associations, and so forth) and, amongst other issues, have developed a communication strategy<sup>9</sup>, specifically in relation to the “Opportunities for Generations” initiative. Furthermore, DG ENTR’s Communication on the “The State of the Competitiveness of the EU Forest-Based and Related Industries”<sup>10</sup> and its consequent evaluation<sup>11</sup> also contain recommendations concerning communication issues.

For DG AGRI and DG ENV the most relevant policy documents mentioning communication in relation to forest issues and consequently, recommendations for guidelines on communication on forestry issues are all in relation to the Forestry Strategy for the European Union<sup>12</sup>.

#### *Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry*

The DG ENTR, i.e. the Unit for Forest-based and Related Industries, is a facilitator for communication activities of the Forest Based Industries (FBI) cluster. Representatives of the most important EU level FBI interest representation organizations<sup>13</sup> meet with the DG ENTR once a month to discuss communication issues. One of the important messages the DG ENTR wants the organizations to send out is that FBI is “Innovative, Sustainable, and provides Employment”. Contact between DG ENTR and especially CEPI, CEPF and CEI-Bois<sup>14</sup> is very frequent, and close cooperation exists between these actors, both formally (see the paragraph on existing networks and cooperation structures) as well as informal.

The DG ENTR distinguishes between two different levels of communication actions, namely: global promotional activities concerning the FBI’s image (cf. CEI-BOIS Roadmap 2010), and local proximity actions, meaning activities on the ground, taken up by the national members of the EU-level FBI representing organizations – a decentralized approach, in which the EU-level associations come up with the over-all strategy, and the national representatives carry out the “on the ground” activities.

The DG ENTR’s internal target groups are the FBI representing organizations mentioned earlier, as well as the other relevant DGs (Agriculture, Environment, Energy, Trade).

<sup>9</sup> Forest-based Industries Working Group on Communications (2004). Communications Strategy for Forest-based Industries in the EU. [source: <http://www.f-bi.org/files/FBI.commstrat-145152A.pdf>]

<sup>10</sup> Commission of the European Communities (1999). The State of the Competitiveness of the EU Forest-Based and Related Industries Draft Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions [COM (1999) 457]

<sup>11</sup> The European Evaluation Consortium (TEEC) (2004). Evaluation of the ‘Communication on the State of Competitiveness of the EU Forest-Based and Related Industries’ Final Report. VOLUME I (Main Report).

<sup>12</sup> Commission of the European Communities (1998). Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Forestry Strategy for the European Union. COM(1998) 649, 03/11/1998.  
 - Council of the European Union (1999). Council Resolution of 15 December 1998 on a forestry strategy for the European Union (1999/C 56/01). In: Official Journal of the European Communities 26.2.1999 [EN].  
 - Commission of the European Communities (2004). Report from the Stakeholder Consultation on the Draft Commission Staff Working Document in support of the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy.  
 - Commission of the European Communities (2005). Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament Reporting on the Implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy [COM(2005) 85 final] {Sec(2005) 333}  
 - Commission of the European Communities (2005). Commission Staff Working Document. Annex to the: Communication on the implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy [SEC(2005) 333] {COM(2005) 84 final}

<sup>13</sup> CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS, CITPA, INTERGRAF, FEFCO and others

<sup>14</sup> see the actor descriptions later on in this chapter

External target groups are: media (journalists etc.), institutions, citizens (with a focus on youth), and various EU level representing organizations (i.e. architects' association). Tools like reports and websites are, however, quite passive. The DG ENTR sees there is great need for more "on the ground action", for instance, by involving youth organizations to reach the young generation.

In general communication with the FBI sector and the other DGs is good. As for communication with society DG ENTR tries to engage the individual Member States (MS) to pick up the issues discussed at EU level negotiations, in the sense that MS take the initiative to set up more communication activities aimed at society regarding their FBI's image.

#### *Directorate General for Agriculture*

Concerning forests and forestry the main responsibilities for DG AGRI are Rural Development and the new Forestry Strategy. When it comes to communication DG AGRI focuses on informing (civil) society about sustainable forest management in Europe. The most important documents in this respect – including paragraphs on communication in forest issues – are the:

- Forestry Strategy for the European Union
- Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "Reporting on the implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy"
- Commission Staff Working Document in Support of the Communication from the Commission.
- Report from the Stakeholder Consultation on the Draft Commission Staff Working Document in Support of the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy

These documents also serve as the main communication tools (aimed at a more expert public), besides more popularized brochures (e.g. "The EU and Sustainable Forest Management"), the DG AGRI website, and various presentations given by DG AGRI staff at a host of meetings, seminars etc.

#### *Directorate General for Environment*

In order for DG ENV to communicate on forestry issues there has to be a clear mandate. But because this is lacking (no Forestry Directive or the like) DG ENV is looking for a mandate via other ways, i.e. environmental legislation<sup>15</sup>:

- Kyoto protocol etc.
- Energy guidelines
- Bird and Habitat directives
- Water Framework directives
- Soil protection<sup>16</sup>
- Tourism<sup>16</sup>

These subject areas represent many actors and committees, thus giving DG ENV a large array of possible target groups for their communication. However, the main target groups concerning forestry issues are: the other relevant DGs, the FBI associations (CEPI, CEI-

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<sup>15</sup> See for instance: European Commission, Directorate-General for the Environment (2003). NATURA 2000 and forests 'Challenges and opportunities'. Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

<sup>16</sup> In preparation

BOIS, CEPF), and with regard to certification (PEFC & FSC structures). Outside Brussels the DG ENV tries to have contact with regional and local organizations – giving DG ENV a more accurate picture of local situations (e.g. on issues like mountain forestry).

DG ENV has no official communication strategy concerning forestry, but along the sideline there are some documents that refer to communication:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Plan (2002), which also forms part of the mandate of DG ENV
- Forestry Strategy for the EU (1998)
- DGs ENV and AGRI are in the midst of preparing a “Communication for a new COM Action Plan (for Sustainable Forest Management)” in which also the worsened economical situation of the forestry sector should be placed under the attention.

Besides these documents, also more popular brochures (e.g. “Natura 2000 and forests: Challenges and Opportunities”), DG ENV’s website, and presentations given at meetings, seminars etc. serve as communication tools.

#### 4.1.2 UNECE/FAO

##### *Communication Strategies of UNECE/FAO Institutions*

Other international organization, operating with an even wider scope than the EU, are the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). With respect to forest issues the Timber Branch, which is the secretariat for the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission, is the most relevant actor. The Timber Branch, aided by experts of the Forest Communicators Network, has recently developed a communication strategy for the next two years<sup>17</sup>.

One of the UNECE/FAO Teams of Specialists, the Forest Communicators Network (FCN), has already done considerable work on communication on forests and forestry. For the network as such there is no communication strategy, however, the network has developed guidelines and training sessions in order to improve communication and PR abilities of its individual members:

- A joint publication together with the FAO/UNECE/ILO Team of Specialists on Participation in Forestry in 2003 on “Raising Awareness of Forests and Forestry”<sup>18</sup>.
- A Press and Publicity Toolkit for forestry and forest industry communication<sup>19</sup>

In 2000 the FCN, kindly supported by the Canadian Forest Service, organized the first International Forest Communicators Forum in St. Johns Canada and developed a strategic concept for forest related communications in the UNECE region (Europe and North America), which states a mid term and short term vision, outlines objectives and proposes

<sup>17</sup> UNECE/FAO Timber Branch (2005). UNECE/FAO Timber Branch Communication Strategy for 2005 and 2006.

<sup>18</sup> FAO/UNECE/ILO Team of Specialists on Participation in Forestry and the FAO/UNECE Forest Communicators Network (2003). Raising Awareness of Forests and Forestry. Building bridges between people, forests and forestry. International Labour Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>19</sup> FAO/UNECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector (2000). Public Relations in Forestry: Communications Strategies in Forestry and the Forest Industry Sector (also known as the Press and Publicity ‘Toolkit’).

actions. The strategy has provided a guiding frame for activities of the network and its individual members.

Planned activities of the FCN for the coming years are:

- A guide on best practices in forest sector communication (2005)
- A workshop/seminar on communication in forest sector policy (based on earlier outputs by the FCN, including studies of public perceptions, "train the trainers" workshops, best practices guide, etc.), with participation of sector policy makers and analysts
- Assistance to the UNECE/FAO secretariat in improving communication about integrated programme, and to the Team of Specialists on gender in forestry and other teams, as requested
- Report on consumer attitudes towards forest products.

#### *UNECE/FAO Timber Branch*

The objective of the **UNECE/FAO Timber Branch** in Geneva is to contribute to achieving sustainable forest management, including the sound and legal use of wood, other forest products and services, throughout the UNECE region, and to ensure measurement of that progress. To contribute to meeting this objective, the *UNECE Timber Committee* and the *FAO European Forestry Commission*, of which the Timber Branch is the secretariat (jointly with FAO Forestry Department in the case of the EFC) will promote cooperation between countries in the region and develop regional and sub-regional initiatives.

Achieving sustainable forest management is primarily a sovereign national responsibility. However, regional international cooperation, through the integrated UNECE/FAO programme and its partners, will contribute by developing and disseminating concepts and information, sharing experience and defining standard measurement tools (indicators). The main contribution is through developing and applying tools to analyse and monitor both policy and developments on the ground, collecting, validating and disseminating information and analysis, as well as stimulating the exchange of experience, and joint efforts to measure progress. The Timber Branch now has a communication strategy, and has previously already done some work in identifying its main communication goals and target-groups.

### **4.1.3 Forestry and Forest-Based Industry Representatives**

#### *Communication Strategies of Forest Based Industry Federations*

The following on Forest Based Industries (FBI) umbrella associations and their communication strategies:

- CEI-Bois follows the FBI communication strategy<sup>9</sup> and develops specific communications strategies as needed, e.g. Roadmap 2010;
- CEPI has a working group on policy and messages, and this group has carried out an extensive study of its communication activities in 2004, as a result of which a working programme on policy and messages has been set up. Apart from that CEPI also follows the FBI communication strategy<sup>9</sup>.
- CEPF follows the FBI communication strategy<sup>9</sup> and develops specific communications strategies as needed, e.g. for special events.

The role of the European forest-based industry federations is essentially two-fold. Firstly, they provide a central reference point for stakeholders in various sectors – both providing and soliciting information on the day-to-day workings of the industry. Secondly, through their contacts with industry stakeholders and their insider knowledge of the industry, the federations are in a better position to inform policy-makers on the issues affecting the represented sectors.

The major federations for the forest-based industries are listed alphabetically below in Box 2.

**Box 2** Major European forest-based industries federations

ACE:	Alliance for Beverage Cartons & the Environment
BIR:	Bureau of International Recycling
CEI-Bois:	European Confederation of Woodworking Industries
CEPE:	European Council of Paint, Printing Ink and Artists' Colours Industry
CEPF:	Confédération européenne des propriétaires forestiers
CEPI:	Confederation of European Paper Industries
CEPIFINE:	European Wood Free Paper Industry
CEPIPRINT:	Association of European Publication Paper Producers
CITPA:	Confédération Internationale des Transformateurs de Papier et Carton en Europe
EUROSAC:	European Federation of Multiwall Paper Sack Manufacturers
EOS:	European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry
EPF:	European Panel Federation
ETS:	European Tissue Symposium
FECOF:	Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières
FEFCO:	European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers
FEDES:	European Flexible Packaging Federation
FEIC:	European Federation of the Plywood Industry
FEP:	European Federation for the Parquet Industry
INTERGRAF:	International Confederation for Printing and Allied Industries
UEA:	European Federation of Furniture Manufacturers
UEF:	Union of European Foresters
UNICE:	Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe
USSE:	Union de Silvicultores del Sur de Europa
WEI:	Western European Institute for Wood Impregnation

A considerable degree of cooperation exists between the Forestry and FBI representing associations at the EU level, the most important ones being CEPI, CEI-Bois, and CEPF. These umbrella organizations form the so-called “core group” and their contact, both formal as well as informal, is very frequent. Their main activities are lobbying with EU institutions, through (joint) position papers, organizing events, participating in discussions, supporting promotional activities, providing the framework for their national members to engage in promotional activities etc. These organizations are the voice of all their national members at the EU institutions, and they also function as a network for these national members, for instance for the spreading of information between them. The umbrella organizations also gather the input their national members might have on new COM proposals/directives.



Recently the forest-based industries (FBI) adopted a communication strategy ([www.fbi.org](http://www.fbi.org)), mainly directed towards stimulating youth-related projects, e.g. by means of awarding a label to high quality youth related projects, events, exhibitions, fairs, seminars, materials etc. The aim of the label is to give added value to all activities, which fulfil certain conditions and criteria set by the FBI Working Group on Communications.

#### *Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)*

CEPI is a non-profit organisation, representing 19 member countries (17 European Union Member States plus Norway and Switzerland) and through its member countries, some 900 pulp, paper and board-producing companies across Europe, from small and medium-sized enterprises to multinationals.

CEPI's goal for effective communication is get the interests of the paper industry know and understood, to be part in relevant discussions, to influence policy, and to be perceived as a reliable partner. For that reason CEPI's communication has to be consistent and long term. Because the arena of forestry discussions is a very active one, all discussions take place in a dynamic, ongoing process – in which CEPI has to have an active part.

CEPI's main target groups are its members, policy circles (at all levels, but at EU level the Commission is the most important target), related FBI associations at all levels, chambers of commerce (at various levels), environmental NGOs at all levels, research institutes and networks, press and media networks.

The main issues on which CEPI communicates are: the perception of the economic function of forests, wood availability, sustainable forest management, plantations, illegal logging, genetically modified trees, biodiversity, and transparency.

CEPI's main activity is lobbying, at the European Commission but also at other institutions. CEPI organizes meetings, events etc. to which its major target groups are invited. Together with the other FBI associations they aim at finding joint positions in order to come up with common strategies in their discussions with for instance the European Commission.

As CEPI represents the entire pulp and paper industry in Europe, it has taken the initiative to establish close links with a number of organisations along the paper chain, and to build alliances with other relevant industry associations in order to share experiences and knowledge. These networks, which are chaired by CEPI, play a vital role in monitoring the EU legislative process, and the close cooperation between members also ensures that synergies are achieved with the optimal use of resources. CEPI also maintains links with related associations worldwide [source: [www.cepi.org](http://www.cepi.org)].

#### *European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)*

CEI-Bois represents the interests of the European woodworking industry, which includes some 100,000 companies employing around 1.9 million workers. The primary goal of CEI-Bois is to further the interests of the European wood sector and to this end, it aims to influence EU policy-making. It is the main body representing and defending the interests of the European woodworking industries towards the European Union. The most important reason for this communication is to enhance the image and to increase the visibility of the FBIs. It is however the task of the CEI-Bois' national members to communicate with the rest of society (in their own country). At the moment CEI-Bois is actively trying to spread the message that there is a need for an increased European approach towards in promotion, research & development, lobbying and competence [source: [www.cei-bois.org](http://www.cei-bois.org)].

Activities:

- European Wood fact sheets: aiming at informing decision-makers about forestry, sustainable forest management, forest as carbon stores, renewability etc.
- Roadmap 2010: aiming at increasing the use of wood products in Europe in order to enhance the competitiveness of the industry. A vision-document, CD-rom and related events all serve to further this message. "Wood and wood products to become the leading material in construction and interior solutions by 2010"

*Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF)*

CEPF is the only umbrella organization of national forest owner organizations in the European Union. Over 60 % of the total forest area in Europe is privately owned. CEPF is currently the Representative of the European Family Forestry in 23 European Countries. CEPF's mission is to assist and strengthen national forest owners' organisations in Europe to maintain and enhance an economical viable, social beneficial, cultural valuable and ecological responsible sustainable forest management [source: [www.cepf-eu.org](http://www.cepf-eu.org)].

The message CEPF spreads depends on the target group. But the most important messages are:

- Coming across as a sector. Looking at a topic like SFM, which mainly concerns the forest owners, policy makers tend to overemphasize this aspect, as a result of which many regulations are developed to enhance SFM on the ground. However, CEPF sees SFM as just one part of a whole chain which comes after SFM, going from transport of the timber cut, to sawmills, to pulp and paper, to wood products manufacturers, and even further. CEPF tries to make the COM (among others) realize this when it is planning to develop regulations affecting the wood producers (the forest owners).
- The message to CEPF's own constituency: the concept of Family Forestry and the long-term idea behind it "Forests for Generations" (as a result of sustainable management). With such an attractive picture, which evokes positive emotions among the public, the image of private forest owners is improved
- To EU institutions CEPF tries to communicate that: the own (self-) responsibility of private forest owners should be stimulated. Meaning that forest owners should get the opportunity to take voluntary action, instead of being forced right away from the start by means of legal actions.

Besides the standard mix of communication instruments, CEPF seems to have had some success in reaching Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) through "funny" actions, e.g. presenting Christmas trees to the European Parliament.

#### **4.1.4 Research Organizations**

*Communication Strategies of Forest Research Organizations/Networks*

- The European Forest Institute (EFI) has a communication strategy, as well as a more detailed implementation program for its communication strategy.
- The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) is currently working on a document on IUFRO's communication. An official document is expected later this year.

- The Forum of Communicators at Nordic and Baltic Forest Research Institutes (FCNBFRI), has also come up with a draft version of a communication strategy<sup>20</sup> for the Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee (SNS).

Due to definition matters EFI will be discussed here below as an actor, whereas IUFRO and the FCNBFRI will be discussed later on, in the chapter on networks.

#### *European Forest Institute*

EFI is the leading forest research network in Europe. With its over 130 member organizations and six Project Centers, it offers the forest research contacts and acknowledged collaboration at the European level. EFI's mission is to promote, conduct and co-operate in research of forestry and forest products at the pan-European level; and to make the results of the research known to all interested parties, notably in the areas of policy formulation and implementation, in order to promote the conservation and sustainable management of forests in Europe. EFI has recently completed its new communication strategy and a communication implementation strategy (EFI 2004).

In order to achieve its purpose, EFI:

- provides relevant information for policy-making and decision-making in European countries relating to the forest and forest industry sector;
- conducts research in the above-mentioned fields;
- develops research methods;
- organizes and participates in scientific meetings; and
- organizes and disseminates knowledge of its work and results.

Consequently, EFI has a role in promoting forest research and communicating sound and unbiased information on European forests at large, to a range of stakeholders and also to the media. The communication is efficient and as actual as possible. EFI shall also tackle new and upcoming forest related issues promptly. EFI's communication needs to be both transparent and active also in the crisis situation, or in cases of negative news.

The ultimate objective of EFI's communication activities is to provide EFI's target audiences with high-quality, timely and relevant information on Europe's forests and forest sector.

EFI's target groups are

1. Forest research and scientific community
2. Policy makers and decision-takers
3. Forest industry and forest managers
4. Membership candidates
5. EFI Members
6. Financiers, contributors, donors
7. Media
8. Special Interest groups (NGOs, environmental groups, other opinion-formers)

EFI is in a process of becoming an international organization. This will mean i.e. greater ability to respond to research and other activities relevant to pan-European needs and a possibility of states to contribute to European forest research [source: [www.efi.fi](http://www.efi.fi) and EFI 2004].

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<sup>20</sup> Nielsen, E. Juel (2002). SNS and communication - A suggested communication strategy for SNS. [source: <http://program.forskningsradet.no/sns/uploaded/nedlasting/>]

## 4.2 Networks and Cooperation Structures

### 4.2.1 Coordination, communication and co-operation – EU level<sup>21</sup>

The EU Forestry Strategy underlines the need for adopting a long-term, holistic approach towards sustainable forest management based on the balanced integration of economic, social and environmental objectives. A fundamental element of this approach is the effective co-ordination of policy areas that affect the forest sector, as well as the active involvement and participation of the sector in the formulation and implementation of the cross-sectoral policies.

Given the fact that forest policy per se is a competence of the Member States, while many horizontal and issue-driven policy initiatives that have an impact also on the forest sector, are developed at the European level, the role of co-ordination between the various policy formation and implementation areas, their institutions and instruments, in the Member States, between the Member States and the Community level, and at the Community level itself, is particularly important for the forest sector.

During the first five years of implementing the **EU Forestry Strategy**, the **Commission** has sought the views of the Member States and of stakeholders on matters related to its implementation, as well as on forest-related initiatives under different Community policies. The co-ordination, communication and co-operation concerning forest-related issues in the EU took many forms. These included, but were not limited to: exchanges of information, facilitation of communication and co-operation within the Commission and between Member States, communication with civil society, and the representation of Member States in the international arena.

Throughout the implementation of the Strategy, co-ordination with the Member States and consultation with relevant interest groups and stakeholders in the forest sector has been channelled through the existing administrative structures and management and consultative committees, which advise the Commission, provide opinions and promote the exchange of information. The institutional mechanisms for these are presented below.

#### *Co-ordination within the Commission*

In order to improve the co-ordination between the Commission services, an important step was taken at the end of 2001, when the Commission formally established an **Inter-Services' Group on Forestry** to strengthen the co-ordination of forest-related issues between the various services responsible for relevant Community policies. The main objective of the group is to improve internal coherence and hence better exploit the potential synergies between policy areas, by managing the information flow between the areas concerned and facilitating collaborative efforts. The experience with this Inter-Service Group has been very positive. There has been a considerable associative effect and an increase in the joint organisational capacity of the relevant Directorates-General of the Commission. The Inter-Service Group has brought together desk officers and managers from at least ten different Directorates-General to address a broad range of relevant issues. The establishment of this group has been beneficial in terms of fostering co-operation between different EU policy sectors. Its activities have been centred on the following areas:

- Co-ordination of actions and initiatives relevant to forestry and implemented in the context of the different Community policies;

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<sup>21</sup> This paragraph is largely based on the chapter on communication and cooperation in: Commission of the European Communities, 2005. Commission Staff Working Document, Annex to the: Communication on the implementation of the EU Forestry [COM(2005) 84 final].

- Communication and co-operation between and with the Member States and other relevant interest groups, including stakeholders, making use of the relevant committees;
- Information and communication activities (such as the preparation of joint publications, participation in conferences, etc.) to increase the visibility and public awareness of EU forestry activities and actions.

#### *Co-ordination with the Member States*

The EU Member States and the Commission co-ordinate positions prior to major forest-related international meetings in the **Council Working Group on Forests**. The Working Group also deals with forest-relevant Commission policy and legislative initiatives, such as FLEGT. This group had existed on an *ad-hoc* basis for a number of years, but in 2002 a decision was taken for it to become a permanent Working Group within the Council. Community positions with respect to the International Tropical Timber Organisation are dealt with in the **Council's Commodities Working Group** (known as PROBA).

The **Standing Forestry Committee**<sup>22</sup> (SFC), which brings together representatives of the Member States and which is chaired by the Commission, has a three-fold role:

- It acts as an advisory and management Committee for specific forestry measures;
- It is also an *ad-hoc* consultation forum that provides expertise in connection with the development of forest-related measures in the framework of various Community policies, such as those on rural development and the environment;
- It provides a venue for exchange of information among Member States, and between Member States and the Commission.

The management function of the SFC is currently limited to the implementation of the new Forest Focus Regulation, adopted in 2003.

The SFC has also continued its role of an *ad-hoc* consultation forum on forest-related issues. Several subject matters, such as rural development, FLEGT, Natura 2000 and forests, research and forest certification have been discussed by the Committee over the last years. A total number of 30 meetings of the Standing Forestry Committee have been held during the period from January 1999 to June 2004.

Over the years, the third role of the SFC, the exchange of information between Member States and with the Commission, has become more important, which is reflected in the increasing number of presentations made by Commission staff from the different services, including information on forestry research, UNFF, FLEGT, etc. This development has met with a positive reaction from the Member States, as it responds to the growing need for timely information about ongoing and planned Community initiatives and activities.

The organisation of **periodic and informal meetings of Forest Directors** by successive presidencies of the EU has also contributed to improving the exchange of information on issues of common interest.

#### *Communication and co-operation with stakeholders*

Co-operation and communication with stakeholders have taken place in the context of the existing committees. There has been a regular information exchange, co-operation and co-ordination with forestry interest groups and stakeholders through the following committees:

- **The Advisory Committee on Forestry and Cork**, which in May 2004 was replaced by the Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork<sup>23</sup>, includes representatives of forest

<sup>22</sup>Council Decision 89/367/EEC of 29 May 1989 (OJ L 165, 15.6.1989, p. 14).

<sup>23</sup>Commission Decision 2004/391/EC of 23 April 2004 (OJ L 120, 24.4.2004, p. 50).

owner organisations (public and private), forest-based industries, environmental NGOs, forest trade unions, traders and consumer groups.

- **The Advisory Committee on Community Policy Regarding Forestry and Forest-based Industries** involves representatives from the whole spectrum of EU forest-based industries, forest owners and other relevant experts<sup>24</sup>. Within the Advisory Committee several working groups exist.
- **The Forest-based and Related Industries Communication Working Group** (COM - DG Enterprise and Industry, with CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS as the major actors) deals specifically with FBI communication issues.
- In addition, a **Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee** was established for the woodworking industries<sup>25</sup> in 1998, in which the organisations representing employers and workers of the woodworking industries at European level develop their social dialogue. It provides an appropriate forum for the discussion of issues linked to employment, working conditions, vocational training, industrial change, enlargement, etc.

The Commission has used these committees as *ad-hoc* consultative forums in support of forest sector-related activities.

The open internet-based stakeholder consultation in the context of the implementation report of the EU Forestry Strategy is another step towards increased transparency and communication in conducting forest-related activities at Community level.

#### *Communication between Forest-based Industries and the EU*

The forest cluster's place within the EU's industrial and forest strategies was acknowledged when the European Commission issued a communication in 1999 on the competitiveness of the European Union's forest-based industries<sup>26</sup>. In the report one obstacle to competitiveness was the lack of positive image and difficulties to attract young people to make a career in these industries.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise then was commissioned by the pulp and paper industry to carry out a survey on how the forestry and forest-based industries are perceived by citizens in the 15 member states of the European Union<sup>27</sup>. The results of the study indicate a major lack of knowledge amongst the general public, in particular young people, on the FBI sector.

These findings – and because the importance of communication and education was one of the main subjects discussed at the F-BI Forum in Brussels the 18th February 2003 – have prompted the main organizations of forest-based industries, together with the European Commission, to develop a common communications strategy<sup>28</sup>, which could be implemented by the forestry and FBI sectors and by member countries.

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<sup>24</sup> DG ENTR and CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS, CIPA, INTERGRAF, FEFCO etc.

<sup>25</sup> Commission Decision 322/1998 of 20 May 1998 and Commission Communication COM(2002) 341 final of 26 June 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Directorate General for Enterprise, E. C. (1999). The State of the Competitiveness of the EU Forest-Based and Related Industries. Draft Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

<sup>27</sup> Directorate General for Enterprise, E. C. (2002). Perceptions of the wood-based industries: Qualitative study of the image of wood-based industries amongst the public in the Member States of the European Union. Enterprise Publications. Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: 71.

<sup>28</sup> Forest based Industries Working Group on Communications (2004). Communications Strategy for Forest-based Industries in the EU.

The main goal of the communications strategy is to make the forest-based industries more attractive, by:

- Raising public awareness on the forestry and FBI sectors
- Pointing out these industries' economic importance
- Creating transparency
- Creating identification with its products
- Creating trust in the efficiency of the forestry and FBI sector

The target groups included decision-makers in business and policy, journalists and young people and teachers. After carrying out a mapping among the forest-based industries national members, the conclusions showed that most of the work done was aimed at decision-makers and journalists. The biggest gap overall was a lack in communication towards young people and teachers. Therefore, in order to not duplicate work that is sufficiently covered at national level, this strategy mainly targets young people and teachers.

The *Forest-based and Related Industries Working Group on Communication*<sup>29</sup> will act as an initiator and co-ordinator of the overall strategy. Its work should, however, be validated, supported and implemented at national level. The forest-based industries national members are requested to endorse this strategy and to be actively involved in its implementation. The FBI Working Group on Communications (comprised of DG ENTR and FBI umbrella organizations) will report on the progress in implementing the strategy to its national members. This working group suggests decentralized action to create or cultivate fertile ground, since the perception study showed that the recognition of forest-based industries is linked to their proximity. It was proposed to identify some Euro Info Centres that have an interest in the issues affecting forest-based industries - particularly any Centres that are geographically close to the sector. EIC interested will organize some seminars at which business people in the sector will talk about their experiences of good practice in communication, innovation and education. The seminar participants will be young people (potential future employees) and entrepreneurs in the forest-based industries (SMEs, subcontractors, distributors) that are potential partners in improving communication, innovation and education. This pilot project, which has been taking place since the end of December 2004, is scheduled to last several months and can be considered as one important step in the development of the F-BI communication strategy.

#### Opportunities for Generations

In 2003 the working group gathered existing youth-related FBI projects, which have proved to be successful in various countries, and printed them in a brochure (see [www.fbi.org](http://www.fbi.org)). Websites also for e.g. exchanging views and professional experiences should be established. It would be a good information platform as well as a part of an international network.

A European FBI label/stamp will be awarded to high quality youth related projects, events, exhibitions, fairs, seminars, materials etc. The aim of the label is to give added value to all activities, which fulfil certain conditions, and criteria set by the FBI Working Group on Communications. Applications for getting the permission to use the label will

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<sup>29</sup> Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI); Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF); European Commission, DG Enterprise, F-BI Unit; European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois); European Timber Trade Federation (FEBO); European Tissue Symposium; International Confederation of Paper and Board Converters in Europe (CITPA); International Confederation for Printing and Allied Industries (INTERGRAF)

be sent to the Working Group. The projects and activities are mainly carried out by national associations but co-ordinated at European level. The label is: "Wood & Paper – Opportunities for Generations" And the derivations are: "Wood & Forests – Opportunities for Generations" "Paper - Opportunities for Generations" "Printing - Opportunities for Generations".

A small and simple leaflet was published to outline the aims and work of the FBI Working Group on Communications in order to commit all possible organisations and national associations to the communications initiative.

The FBI Working Group on communication suggested decentralised action in the form of seminars; organised in collaboration with the Euro Info Centres (EIC). These seminars are aimed at young people and/or small and medium sized entrepreneurs to whom business people in the sector will talk about their experiences of "good practices" in communication, education and innovation.

#### Evaluation of the European Forest-Based Industry Policy

The Commission has carried out an external evaluation of the 1999 Communication on the "The State of the Competitiveness of the EU Forest-Based and Related Industries" COM (1999) 457. The goal of the evaluation was to see to what extent the Communication continues to address the current situation of the industries and the challenges they face.

The Evaluation Findings: Industry stakeholders continue to see the challenges diagnosed in the 1999 Communication as reflecting the situation in their industries to a significant degree, and praise the extensive research and industry consultation efforts which were organised by the European Commission during the development of the Communication. Some of the key benefits which the evaluation found arose from the Communication are increased visibility of forest-based industries at the EU level, a strengthened policy dialogue and consultation mechanisms between industries and the European Commission, and enhanced co-operation between the industries, and increased understanding of their linkages and commonalities. Regarding the six action areas, the evaluation found that promising work has been undertaken across a number of the action areas, in particular regarding the image of the forest-based industries.

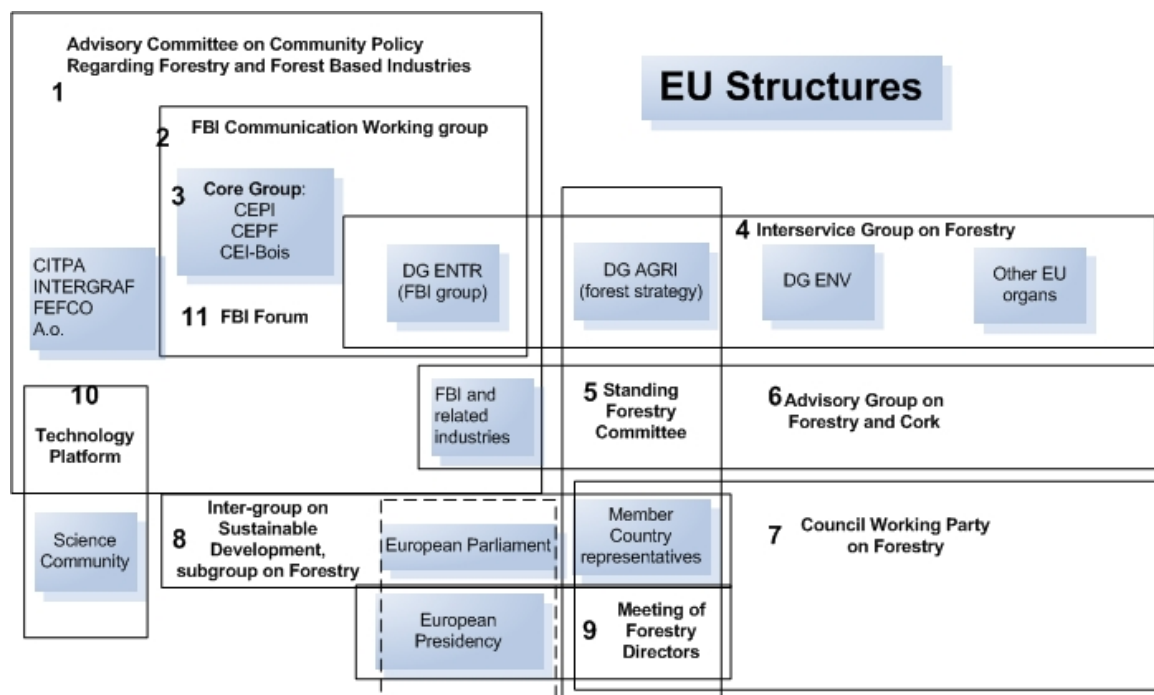
The evaluation involved the consultation of more than 100 stakeholders and provided valuable recommendations as to the key priority issues, as well as giving strong support for a new policy initiative. These priorities include more effort to address the image challenge, a reduction of the regulatory burden (in part through streamlining of existing legislation and enhanced impact assessment of planned new regulatory measures), the promotion of the qualities of wood products, the harmonization of building norms for wood products, an increased focus on research - including creation of a technology platform, an increased co-ordination of EU policy-making concerning the forest-based industries and the forestry sector, and improving co-operation with Member States.



**Box 3** Summary Formal Communication Structures at the EU level

1. Advisory Committee on Community Policy Regarding Forestry and Forest Based Industries (DG ENTR and CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS, CITPA, INTERGRAF, FEFCO), which can be seen as the most important regular meeting in FBI circles. This meeting structure is based on the recommendations in the 1999 Commission Communication on the State of Competitiveness of the EU Forest Based and Related Industries. Besides the monthly meeting there is also a larger meeting organized 3 to 4 times per year at the Commission, with more participants.
2. Forest-based and Related Industries Communication Working Group (COM - DG Enterprise and Industry, with CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS as the major actors)
3. “Core Group” (informal meeting between CEPI, CEPF, CEI-BOIS) meets at least once per month to discuss/find joint positions in further negotiations with the COM.
4. Inter-service Group on Forests: meeting between DG AGRI with other relevant DGs for strengthening coordination on forest related issues.
5. Standing Forestry Committee – one of the Committees of the European Commission, DG Agriculture. It comprises of the representatives of the governments of the EU member countries.
6. Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork of the Standing Forestry Committee of the European Commission. Represents different fields of forestry and stakeholders, such as industry, research, forest owners and environmental organisations.
7. Working Party on Forestry (Council Working Group). Organized by the Council for heads of forestry issues in MS.
8. European Parliament Inter-group on Sustainable Development, with a subgroup on Forestry.
9. Meeting of Forestry Directors (MS heads of forest units, chiefs of forest service, head of forest administration etc.) organized normally once per EU Presidency by the Presidency (= 1 / every 6 months).
10. Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform, a cooperative structure launched at the FBI Forum 2005, aimed at directing research priorities [<http://www.forestplatform.org>]
11. Forest-based Industry Forum (all major FBI representing associations together with the relevant DGs, organized once per year)

Box 3 gives a summary of formal communication structures at the EU level. Figure 12 presents an overview of how these structures relate to each other and which organizations are mainly involved in these structures. The numbers in Figure 12 relate to the numbers used in the summary above.



**Figure 12** Overview of coordination, communication and co-operation structures at the EU level, relevant to the forest sector.

#### 4.2.2 Co-ordination, communication and co-operation – UNECE/FAO level

##### *General UNECE/FAO policy*

The TC and the EFC work wherever possible in partnership with other organisations. As of 2004, there are operational partnerships in place with MCPFE, Eurostat and ITTO, and cooperation with a very wide range of organisations. There is scope for developing and strengthening partnerships with several other organisations<sup>30</sup>. The modalities of cooperation should be determined and reported by programme element.

##### *UNECE Timber Committee (TC)*

Meets annually in Geneva, as a forum for policy discussion and for discussion of market trends and outlook. It also reviews implementation of the work programme. Every four years, it meets in joint session with the European Forestry Commission, to carry out a strategic review of the whole integrated programme. The next joint session after 2004 will be in 2008 in Rome.

##### *FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC)*

Meets every two years, alternately in a HQ location (Geneva or Rome) and a member country. It reviews recent developments in policy and institutions and acts as a policy forum. It identifies emerging policy issues in the region for the FAO Committee on Forests (COFO). It also reviews implementation of the work programme.

<sup>30</sup> Including, among intergovernmental organisations the EU (DGs ENV, AGRI and ENTR, COST Actions), European Environment Agency (EEA), International Labour Office (ILO), and a wide range of NGOs, including European Forest Institute (EFI), World Wide Fund for Nature International (WWF), The World Conservation Union (IUCN), Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), European National Forestry Information Network (ENFIN).

*Bureaux*

The Bureaux consist of the office-holders (Chairman and Vice-Chairs) of the TC and the EFC and the Chair of the (Joint FAO/UNECE) Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics. They meet at least annually, usually with representatives of MCPFE. The Bureaux decide on how the work programme is to be implemented. In addition, there are also the **Joint Sessions of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission**.

*Teams of specialists*

Several activities are implemented or guided by teams of specialists, which are time limited, and voluntary groups of experts who work with the secretariat to achieve specified goals. Each team has time limited, specific terms of reference in a standard format. Drafts of these mandates are attached, although some await input from other partners, and are not final. The integrated programme has 7 teams as follows (the TS most relevant for communication issues are in bold):

- **TS for Forest Products Markets and Marketing**
- Monitoring forest resources for sustainable forest management in UNECE Region
- Gender and forestry
- Best practices in forest contracting
- Support and contribution to sustainable development of the forest sector in central and eastern Europe and in the CIS
- Forest fire
- **Forest communicators network**

Furthermore there is also a **FAO Advisory Committee on Paper and Wood Products (ACPWP)**.

*Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics*

Meets annually in Geneva to provide guidance to activities in work first three work areas, described above, as well as any other linked activity.

*Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO experts network to implement SFM*

The network contributes to the implementation of the work programme, social and cultural aspects of forestry – sustainable forest management.

*Forest Communicators Network*

The FAO-UNECE Forest Communicators Network (FCN) – formerly called the Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector – was established by the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission in support of the overall goal of creating a positive image of the forest sector including all phases of forest resource management and forest industry.

The mandate given at the joint meeting of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission in October 2000 until November 2004 states the following specific tasks:

- Promote networking among member states for capacity building and exchange of information in public relations and communication;
- Identify key common concepts and promote their incorporation in forest sector communications and public relations activities in the member countries;

- Identify key needs for improvement of forest sector public relations and communication and communicate them to the TC and the EFC;
- Assist the TC and the EFC to improve public relations and information related to their work;
- Promote the development of national capacity in forest sector public relations and communication, particularly in countries in transition;
- Stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest products as environmentally friendly and renewable resources.

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) acknowledged the work of the FCN as a contribution to the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Ministers responsible for forests in 44 European countries. Some specific FCN activities form an integral part of the MCPFE work programme.

Participation in the FCN has been kept open to all, sharing the common objectives and the concern about the above mentioned tasks. The team has established a communication network throughout the UNECE region, formed subgroups to deal with specific issues and produced a number of publications. The team conducted meetings in different countries of the UNECE region, to exchange information on selected topics, to develop concepts, to take stock on achievements and to decide on further activities.

As a contribution to building PR capacity, particularly in Central and Eastern European Countries, the FCN held a Workshop for Countries in Transition to Market Economy, 1996 in Austria, and conducted Train the Trainers Seminars on strategic communications planning, media relations and issue management (2002 in Latvia, 2003 in the United Kingdom and 2004 in Bulgaria).

Concerning resources the FCN built completely on voluntary contributions by and inputs of individuals, countries and organizations in terms of expertise, man power and finances. These inputs together with synergies created through co-operations with other actors, such as the MCPFE and the ToS on Public Participation, have generated a climate of remarkable productivity. The inputs required by the Secretariat of the EFC/TC in Geneva were minor in terms of manpower, but crucial in terms of substance. The Secretariat has hosted the internet website as integral part of the TC website, maintained the contact data base and had a representative participating in the meetings, acting as rapporteur and providing the link to the EFC, the TC and other committees and teams.

The FCN has had the following outputs:

- Europeans and their forests - FCN/MCPFE publication on public opinion of Europeans towards forests
- Substitution report - "The competitive climate for wood products and paper packaging: the factors causing substitution with emphasis on environmental promotions"
- PR Toolkit - "Communications strategies in forestry and the forest industry sector"
- Country fact sheets - "Forest and forest industries country fact sheets"

A new mandate for the FCN given by the UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission for the period of 2005 to 2008 states the following objectives:

To improve the ability of the forest and forest products sector to communicate effectively, within and outside the sector, and to raise the awareness of sector policy makers of the potential of modern effective communication tools.

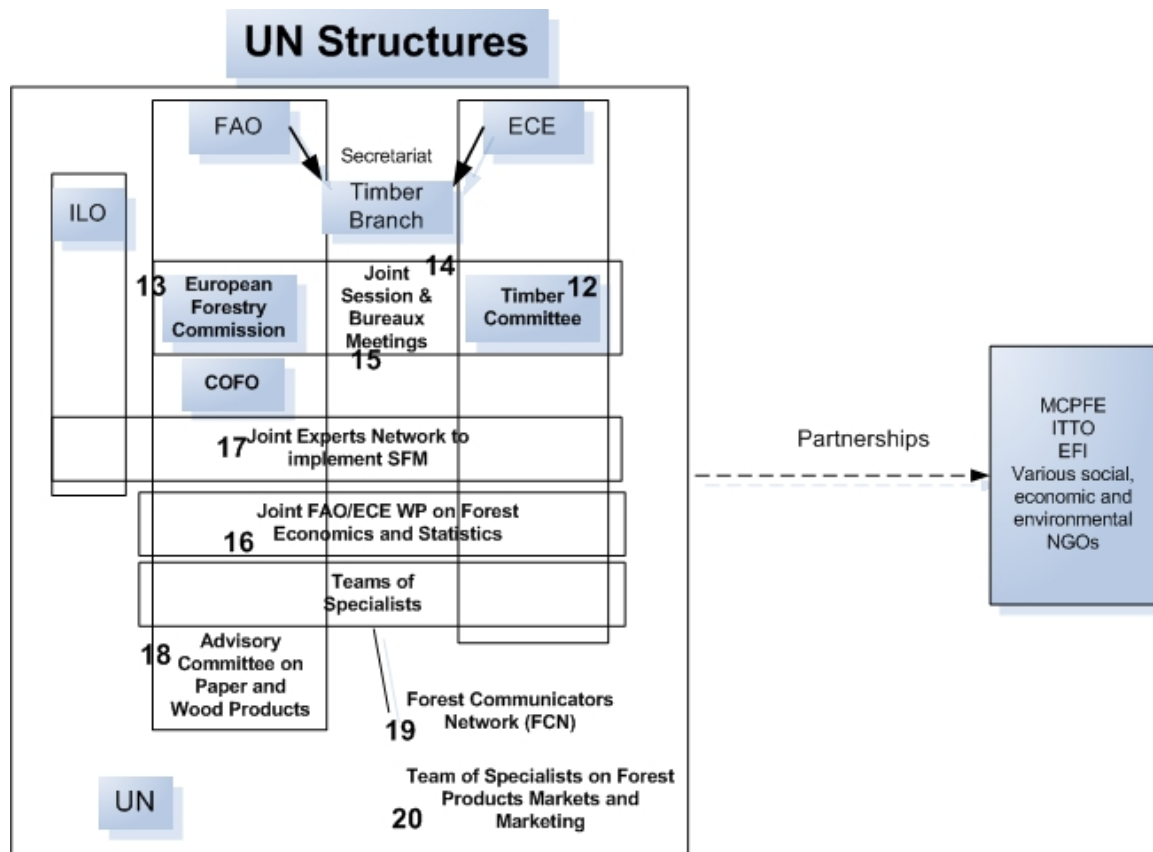
The following outputs are expected:

- Guide on best practices in forest sector communication (2005);
- Workshop/seminar in communication in forest sector policy (based on earlier outputs by FCN, including studies of public perceptions, "train the trainers" workshops, best practices guide, etc.), with participation of sector policy makers and analysts;
- Assistance to UNECE/FAO secretariat in improving communication about integrated programme, and to Team of Specialists on gender in forestry and other teams, as requested;
- Report on consumer attitudes towards forest products (completion expected for 2005).

**Box 4** Summary of Formal Communication Structures at the UN level

12. UNECE Timber Committee
13. FAO European Forestry Commission
14. Joint Sessions of the UNECE TC and the FAO EFC.
15. Bureaux
16. Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics
17. Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO experts network to implement sustainable forest management
18. FAO Advisory Committee on Paper and Forest Products
19. Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector (short: Forest Communicators Network)
20. Team of Specialists on Forest Products Markets and Marketing

Box 4 gives a summary of formal communication structures at the UN level. Figure 13 presents an overview of how these structures relate to each other and which organizations are mainly involved in these structures. The numbers in Figure 13 relate to the numbers used in the summary above.



**Figure 13** Overview of United Nations coordination, communication and co-operation structures at the European level, relevant to the forest sector.

#### 4.2.3 Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

The “Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe” (MCPFE) is a high-level political initiative for co-operation. It addresses common opportunities and threats related to forests and forestry and promotes sustainable management of forests in Europe. Launched in 1990, it is the political platform for the dialogue on European forest issues.

Around 40 European countries and the European Community are represented in the MCPFE. Furthermore non-European countries and international organizations participate as observers. Thus, the MCPFE provides not only a forum for co-operation of ministers responsible for forests, but also allows non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations to contribute with their knowledge and ideas.

The MCPFE is a dynamic process that takes care of the most important common concerns about forests and forestry in Europe and addresses the challenges ahead. This process is based on a chain of conferences at ministerial level and follow-up mechanisms. At the conferences aspects of highest political interest and concern are dealt with by the ministers responsible for forests. Following the Ministerial Conferences, the decisions passed by the ministers are further specified and put into action at expert meetings. In addition, issues of immediate interest are taken up and further developed on a flexible basis.

The signatory states and the European Community are responsible for implementing the MCPFE decisions at regional, national and sub-national levels. Based on voluntary

commitments, which constitute a common framework, governments all over Europe have taken initiatives to ensure and improve the sustainable management and protection of forests.

Since its beginnings in 1990, the dialogue within the MCPFE has succeeded in intensifying political and scientific communication in Europe and establishing close and successful co-operation on a wide range of issues related to forests and forestry. This dialogue not only involves governmental representatives of the participating countries, but also a variety of stakeholders including environmental and social NGOs, forest owners' associations, the forest industry, as well as intergovernmental organizations. Although the actors involved represent a variety of opinions and interests, they share the commitment to the sustainable development and protection of forests in Europe.

A co-operation throughout a continent

Encompassing the whole of Europe, the MCPFE can be regarded as a successful example for cross-border co-operation throughout a continent. It has always considered European forests to be a common heritage and has recognized that threats to these valuable ecosystems do not always follow territorial or ideological borders. Thus, from its very beginnings the dialogue and co-operation within the MCPFE has built bridges between the East and West, as well as the North and South of Europe, resulting in the sharing of ideas and creation of mutual awareness and understanding for the diverse conditions and situations in Europe [source [www.mcpfe.org](http://www.mcpfe.org)].

The Liaison Unit is responsible for the organization and carrying out of all international meetings of the MCPFE as well as the preparation of reports and papers and the substantial development of the technical background documents for discussion at these meetings. It is a service-oriented office to support the co-operation of the ministers responsible for forests in Europe.

The Liaison Unit Warsaw does not have a written communication strategy yet. Its systematic activities includes provision of the MCPFE website, issue of the periodic newsletter and other edition of publications. To enhance two-way communication, open access for the national focal points was established within the MCPFE website. As regard fostering communication with the participating countries, the establishment of a country correspondents group for the MCPFE website to provide information for the "News from countries" folder can be seen as a good example. The former Liaison Unit in Vienna had good experiences with the hiring of a PR professional to foster media relations (both in Austria, as well as, in other countries).

#### 4.2.4 Industry-led initiatives

The FBI umbrella organizations are involved in several regular formal as well as informal negotiation structures with the COM: the Advisory Committee on Community Policy Regarding Forestry and Forest Based Industries; Forest-based and Related Industries Communication Working Group; Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork of the Standing Forestry Committee of the European Commission. The FBI umbrella organizations also organize the **Forest Based Industry Forum**. The FBI Forum is a meeting where key players and actors in the European Forest-Based Industries, as well as high-level representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament, and other Institutions meet. In 2005 the topic of the forum was the *enhancement of competitiveness*.

One of the key-events at the FBI Forum 2005, was the launching of the Forest-based Sector Technology Platform.

*Technology Platform of the European Forest-Based Sector (FTP)*

The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), the Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF) and the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) have started a project to set up a Technology Platform for the forest-based sector. The FTP project constitutes a management process to develop the sector's road map for the future. Supported by a wide range of different stakeholders, the FTP is an industry-driven process, embedded in industry reality, and supporting industries' strategy.

The key challenges facing the EU's forest-based sector are value creation and cost reduction. In order to be competitive, the sector has to achieve further productivity improvements, while maintaining its sustainability record. New products and end markets, and smart applications resulting from society needs will be the cornerstone of the value creation. The development of new technologies will contribute to cost reductions and increased eco-efficiency. Innovation and technology transfer will be the European forest-based sectors answer to its key challenges.

New technologies will be applied to optimise production and will also focus on increasing sustainability. Reducing energy use, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, disposing of recycling residues, better harvesting to have more biofuels without using raw material for paper making, etc., can all be addressed through new technologies and therefore have a potential to replace regulatory approaches [source: [www.forestplatform.org](http://www.forestplatform.org)].

Characteristics of the FTP:

- Engages all interlinked parts of the forest-based sector.
- Concerns all EU-countries (to various degree and with various focus depending on national and geographical conditions), including national financing bodies.
- Concerns long and complicated supply chains from tree to consumer.
- Requires access to a multiplicity of competencies and experiences.
- Requires a holistic approach.

Goals of the FTP:

- Strengthened competitiveness
- Strengthened position as the global technology leader.
- Improved sustainability - a competitive advantage for the forest-based sector.
- More efficient R&D.
- Platform for dialogue influencing the political framework for the sector.
- Support for strategic business planning.
- Improved image of the sector in EU.

*Nordic Timber Council*

The Nordic Timber Council (NTC) is the joint promotion organisation of the wood and wood products industries in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The NTC's vision is that wood and wood products are to become the leading material in construction and interior solutions by 2010. The NTC promotes the benefits of using wood, wood products and systems to consumers, trade, industry and specifiers as well as to politicians and other opinion formers. The NTC's objective is to increase the consumption of wood, wood



based products and systems according to targets set in co-operation with the European industry. To achieve its objectives the NTC forms a coordinated Nordic force with joint resources to promote wood, wood products and systems in general. Promotion will be carried out by bilateral cooperation, Pan-European projects, and by playing an active role in the Road Map 2010 process. The NTC promotes the use of wood as a generic material, regardless of origin, based on wood's environmental benefits and on sustainable forest management. The NTC has organized the following campaigns [source: [www.nordictimber.org](http://www.nordictimber.org)]:

#### Wood for Good

In 2005, the wood for good campaign continues its mission to achieve a substantial and sustained change in attitudes towards wood, leading to an increase in consumption in the UK.

Financial contributors in UK are: the Forestry Commission, the UK sawn wood promoters, the TTF, the Forestry and Timber Association, the Northern Ireland Forestry Service and the Timber Marketing Group.

#### Actions:

- A. Changing attitudes advertising campaign
- B. Product and environment advertising campaign
- C. Public relations
- D. Trade support

#### Le Bois c'est essentiel!

Le bois, c'est essentiel is a three-year campaign with clear objectives for each year.

The second year, 2005, the campaign will concentrate on changing attitudes in order to, the last year, engage in consumption increasing activities.

Financial contributor in France, with 50%, is CNDB.

#### Actions:

- A. Changing attitudes advertising campaign
- B. Activities for professionals
- C. Public relations activities
- D. Trade support

#### European Cooperation/Roadmap 2010

Timber 2000 Europe activities are in 2005 aimed at increasing European cooperation, support the Roadmap 2010 process (CEI-Bois) and to strengthen NTC's role as an initiator and catalyst in European cooperation. All Pan European projects 2004 are transformed into "European Cooperation/Roadmap 2010" (Included in this budget European Wood Magazine, Environmental Communication, Building Europe and Transport and Packaging). Included in the budget for Timber 2000 Europe is also member information, feedback, to the Nordic industry.

#### Actions

- A. European Cooperation/Roadmap 2010
- B. PR General/Member info.

### European Wood Initiative

EWI is a cooperation effort between the national wood promotion organizations in Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden. The aim is to promote the use of wood, especially in construction, as opposed to other materials as concrete, metals and plastic. The Initiative is working in China and Japan and we are requesting for cooperation with the domestic organisations in these countries. The methods of work are transfer of technology and ideas by conferences, seminars, study tours, handbooks, publicity and by work to exchange experiences and give information for legislation and standards in favour of wood. In standard and legislation work, European Wood Initiative acts on a formal mandate from the European umbrella organization of the wood industry, CEI-Bois.

### New European Countries - North

NTC starts cooperation with industrial manufactures and forest owners in the Baltic Sea region. In 2005 focus is on developing a Cooperation- and Action plan for increasing cooperation and promotion in the Baltic Sea region.

Actions:

A. Cooperation- and Action plan

### *Nordic Family Forestry*

A close cooperation between the Nordic forest owners' national organizations started in 1946, when NSF (Nordiska Skogsägarorganisationernas Förbund) was founded. Since 1995, when Finland and Sweden joined the European Union, the organization has been represented at EU level in Brussels by a joint lobbying office, Bureau of Nordic Family Forestry. The one-man representation situated in the middle of the EU-quarters, is working with and through the CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners) as the umbrella federation of European Family Forest Owners to represent the interests of Nordic Forest Owners towards EU-institutions, the forest based and related industries and other organizations active in this field.

### *CEPI led networks*

#### Paper Packaging Co-ordination Group (PPCG)

PPCG aims to facilitate the flow of information between the members of the European paper and board packaging sectors. Its focus is on the implementation and revision of the European Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive and associated issues, including standardisation.

#### European Forest and Forest Products Forum (EFFP)

EFFP is an informal network, which enables European associations and bodies with an interest in forestry issues to discuss and analyse topics of common concern. The objective is to provide a forum where various groups can informally share views and concerns about today's forest issues. In addition, Round-table discussions on specific topics are organised, to which experts from the EU institutions are invited.

## **4.2.5 Research networks**

### *Forum of Communicators at Nordic and Baltic Forest Research Institutes*

The forum consists of communicators employed at Nordic and Baltic forest research organisations in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania.

The aim of the Forum is to increase the efficiency in communication of forest research results in the Nordic and Baltic countries by maintaining a strong network among communication specialists employed in forest research organisations. Through the network the participants will improve their professional competence by

- Exchange of ideas and know-how
- Advice and support to each other
- Evaluation of the communication of Nordic research projects
- Evaluation of new technology
- Annual seminar with contributions from other communication specialists and areas
- Identification of common projects

One of the network's outputs is a communication strategy for the Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee [source: <http://sns.flec.kvl.dk> and Nielsen 2002).

#### *International Union of Forest Research Organization*

IUFRO is "the" global network for forest science cooperation. It unites more than 15,000 scientists in almost 700 Member Organizations in over 110 countries, and is a member of ICSU. Scientists cooperate in IUFRO on a voluntary basis.

Its mission is to promote the coordination of and the international cooperation in scientific studies embracing the whole field of research related to forests and trees for the wellbeing of forests and the people that depend on them.

IUFRO is open to all individuals and organizations dedicated to forest and forest products research and related disciplines. It is a non-profit, non-governmental and non-discriminatory organization with a long tradition dating back to 1892.

Its Stakeholders are research organizations, universities and individual scientists, NGOs, decision-making authorities, forest landowners and other people who depend on forests.

IUFRO attains its objectives by networking activities including the generation, exchange and dissemination of scientific knowledge, the provision of access to relevant information, and the assistance to scientists and institutions to strengthen their research capacities. IUFRO is currently working on an internal document for its communication strategy. IUFRO is the only worldwide international organization devoted to forest research and related sciences. It contributes to the promotion of the use of science in the formulation of forest-related policies [source: [www.iufro.org](http://www.iufro.org)].

#### **4.2.6 Professional networks**

##### *The European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs (ENFE)*

ENFE has a primary objective of information dissemination, between members within the Network, and between the Network and opinion formers in Europe. This will allow the co-ordination of actions necessary for the economic development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in European Forestry and to improve co-operation of Forest Contracting Enterprises in Europe for the social and economic benefit of forest Entrepreneurs and their employees [source: [www.enfe.net](http://www.enfe.net)].

ENFE's common areas of concern comprise the need for:

- Representation of the contractor-entrepreneur sector to the main opinion formers in individual countries and to the European Commission.
- Adoption of common quality management standards as an aid to contractors working within the certification custody chains

- Transfer of best practices across a wide range of specific operations
- Adoption of training programmes to encourage mobility within Europe
- Contractor support when engaged in cross border operations
- Dialogue between Associations, Unions and Employer Organisations

ENFE's work-programme consist of:

- Introduction of a periodic pan-European Newsletter in electronic and hard copy.
- Continue data collection by establishing the extent of the role of the SME in multi-functional forestry operations, and the extent and the role of the Entrepreneur Associations in each of the participating Member States.
- Continue the identification of the common problems
- Identify the opportunities that could be developed that will benefit the economic viability of SME operations.
- Preparation of outline training and research programmes to form the basis of a European wide industry led training and research programmes.
- Working programmes for training and applied research with issues and problems prioritised

#### *Union of European Foresters*

The UEF is a federation of professional foresters organizations from several European countries. The UEF aims are [source: [www.european-foresters.org](http://www.european-foresters.org)]:

- To contribute to reveal the essential role of forests in the balance of nature and the protection of the environment as well as the importance of the economic and social role of forests,
- To defend and promote within the European framework the professional, ethical, and material interests of the associations and their members to take any favourable opportunity to improve the position of foresters within Europe .

#### *Union of Southern European Silviculturists*

The USSE (Union of Southern European Silviculturists) was founded in 1989 on initiative of the organizations of private forest owners of Galicia, Vasque Country and Aquitania, and it nowadays reunites foresters from Portugal to Greece, including Asturias, Navarre, Catalonia, Poitiu-charentes and Italy.

USSE's main goal is to reduce the obstacles between forest regions by creating networks between the professional organizations, the technical (forest)-workers and the research community [source: [www.usse.es](http://www.usse.es)].

### **4.2.7 Certification organizations**

#### *Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC)*

The PEFC Council – formerly the Pan-European Forest Certification framework – is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in 1999, which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. The PEFC provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that they are promoting the sustainable management of forests.

PEFC is a global umbrella organisation for the assessment of and mutual recognition of national forest certification schemes developed in a multi-stakeholder process. These national schemes build upon the inter-governmental processes for the promotion of

sustainable forest management, a series of on-going mechanisms supported by 149 governments in the world covering 85% of the world's forest area.

PEFC has in its membership 31 independent national forest certification systems of which 18 to date have been through a rigorous assessment process involving public consultation and the use of independent consultants to provide the assessments on which mutual recognition decisions are taken by the membership. These 18 schemes account for over 100 million hectares of certified forests producing millions of tonnes of certified timber to the market place making PEFC the world's largest certification scheme. The other national members schemes are at various stages of development and are working towards mutual recognition under the PEFC processes [source: [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)].

Although communication is important for every organization, it is essential in the case of certification. A logical goal is for the PEFC logo has to become known, accepted, and adopted by as many actors as possible. According to PEFC it is easiest to communicate within the forest sector, because then technical terms can be used. Communication with the broader public is more difficult. For that reason PEFC communicates differently to different actor groups. Forest owners, forest industry, and the public are approached with different strategies and messages. One of the main challenges for PEFC is to learn how to communicate with the help of mass-media (TV and radio) in order to reach large audiences. Costs are of course an obstacle in doing so.

#### *Forest Stewardship Council*

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international network to promote responsible management of the world's forests. FSC brings people together to find solutions to the problems created by bad forestry practices and to reward good forest management. The Forest Stewardship Council is an international association of members consisting of a diverse group of representatives from environmental and social groups, the timber trade and the forestry profession, indigenous people's organizations, responsible corporations, community forestry groups and forest product certification organizations from around the world. FSC is a stakeholder owned system for promoting responsible management of the world's forests. Through consultative processes, it sets international standards for responsible forest management. It accredits independent third party organizations that can certify forest managers and forest product producers to FSC standards. Its trademark provides international recognition to organizations that support the growth of responsible forest management and its product label allows consumers worldwide to recognize products that support the growth of responsible forest management worldwide.

FSC undertakes marketing programs and information services that contributes to the mission of promoting responsible forestry worldwide. Over the past 10 years, 50 million hectares in more than 60 countries have been certified according to FSC standards while several thousand products are produced using FSC certified wood and carrying the FSC trademark. FSC operates through its network of National Initiatives in more than 34 countries [source: [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)].

#### **4.2.8 Regional Networks**

##### *International Association for Mediterranean Forests*

The International Association for Mediterranean Forests (IAFM), founded in 1996, has the following aims [source: [www.aifm.org](http://www.aifm.org)]:

- To facilitate the exchange of knowledge and information related to forest and other natural environments in countries with a Mediterranean climate; as well as knowledge and information concerning the management, protection and development of such environments;  
To foster interdisciplinary cooperation as extensive and direct as possible at an international level concerning the environmental, technical, socio-economic and developmental aspects of those areas where the natural conditions referred to above prevail.

The forms of action undertaken by the Association are:

- The organisation of national and international meetings: working parties, conferences, trips, study visits, exhibitions;
- The organisation of exchange and training courses and the reception of people coming from the countries involved;
- The publication of newsletters, journals and other documentation;
- The promotion of any action facilitating the realisation of cooperative projects;
- The promotion of any other undertaking favourable to achieving the Association's aims.

#### *Forest Academy Finland*

In the Forest Academy Finland project (2003-04) Finland invited groups of top-level representatives of the forest sectors of the new and applicant countries of the EU to Finland for open brainstorming and exchanging information and experiences with major representatives of the Finnish forest sector, along with other European actors.

The aim of the forums of Forest Academy Finland was to strengthen networking and understanding between old, new and applicant EU countries, support national forest sector development in the participating countries through exchange of experiences, and provide tools and capacities for communication about the potentials of forests in support of societal development.

The Forest Academy Finland project was financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland, and organized by the Finnish Forest Association. The Forest Academy concept is not related to a science academy. It is also neither a typical seminar concentrating on information dissemination, nor a policy forum where negotiations on policy decisions are made. Instead, the strategy of the Forest Academy Finland project has been to offer a platform, where the participants can gain high-quality information, create new contacts, and form an integrated view of forest sector development options in Europe. This threefold strategy of Forest Academy Finland largely follows the strategy of the *Forest Academy for Decision-Makers in Finland*, through which the Finnish forest sector has successfully communicated with top-level societal decision-makers during the last ten years. Moreover, in the Forest Academy Finland, Finland has been willing to demonstrate the Finnish case in forest sector development and share experiences of the Finnish forest sector from joining the EU.

Some 20 representatives of the new and applicant countries of the EU and 7 – 8 participants from Finland took part in each forum. Observers from other EU countries and international organisations were also invited to join. New individuals participated in each forum. This enabled the continuous enlargement of the network of contacts. All in all, 118 persons from 15 different countries took part in the forums. The participants represented a high level of decision-making in the forest sectors of the respective countries,

representing different aspects of forestry, e.g. forestry administration, state forest services, private forestry, forest industries, forest research, and social and environmental aspects of forestry [see also: [www.forestacademy.fi](http://www.forestacademy.fi)].

Forest Academy Finland has made a contribution to improving forest sector networking within the new and applicant EU countries. Among the participants there is high willingness and demand to continue with similar efforts, and for expanding them to a pan-European level. Such forums could be one import tool in exchanging experiences and advancing the implementation of European forest policies at various levels (EU, MCPFE, UNECE/FAO). A possible continuation of this type of network building could be in the form of a “Forest Academy Europe”. Naturally, such activities could best build on existing networks and organizations. It could be a consortium of several countries, or an international network or organization (Hellström et al., 2004).

### **4.3 Discussion and Overview of the Challenges Identified**

#### **4.3.1 Overview figure and table**

In identifying what is already happening in the field of communication, and which communication gaps remain, one has to first define what is actually meant with communication. The theoretical concepts on communication discussed in the theoretical framework will now be related to the results of the interviews and questionnaires.

To start of with, in Figure 14 an overview of all actors and cooperation structures discussed in the previous chapters is presented and in Table 2 a summary of the main actors/networks communication practices is given.

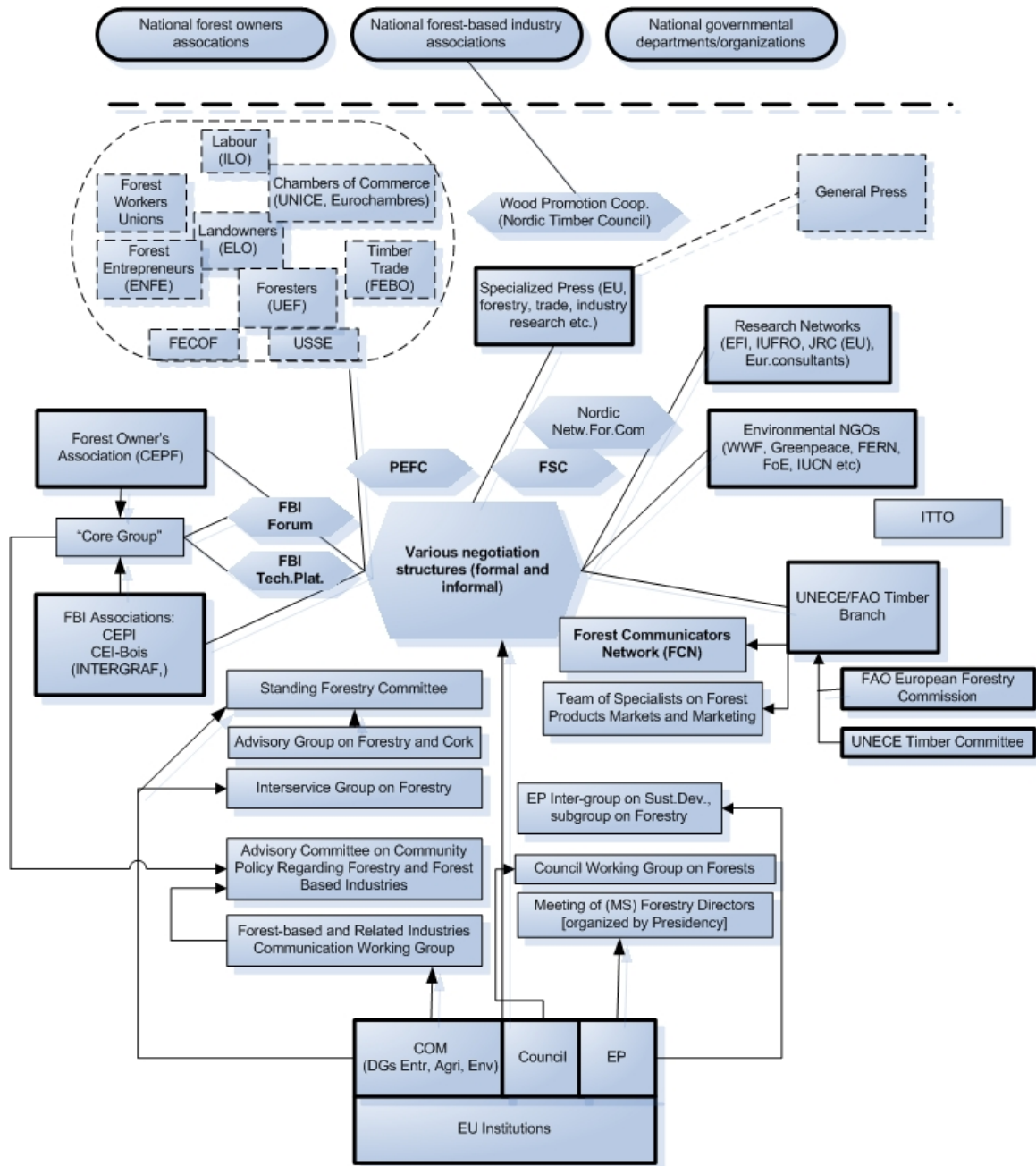


Figure 14 Overview of all discussed actors and cooperation structures.



**Table 2** Summary table of major actors' communication practices

Actor	Existing Communication Strategy	Target Groups	Messages	Channels	Known projects	Implementation	Resources
DG ENTR (FB&RI)	Yes, in cooperation with FBI Core Group	Other policy sectors; youth; architects	Unified policy framework for forests; wood is sustainable, FBI is an attractive employer	Standard mix, FBI Forum, FTP	"Opportunities for Generations"	Ongoing	Manpower
DG AGRI	Not specifically. Other relevant documents	Other policy sectors and stakeholders	SFM, rural development	Standard mix	Forestry Strategy for EU (although officially a document by the whole COM...)	Ad Hoc	Manpower
DG ENV	Not specifically. Other relevant documents	Other policy sectors and stakeholders	SFM, CO2	Standard mix		Ad Hoc	Manpower
UNECE/FAO TB	Yes	TC, EFC, MCPFE, UNFF etc.	The value and use of the TB's products <sup>31</sup> , expertise and services <sup>32</sup> .	Standard mix		Starting up	Manpower
CEPI	Yes, for the own organization and in cooperation with FBI Core Group	Members, Policy network, associations, etc.	Paper is a natural and recyclable product coming from sustainably managed	Standard mix, FBI Forum, FTP	Study on target groups on different levels	Ongoing	Yes, financial

<sup>31</sup> Products are study publications, website, databases.

<sup>32</sup> Services are expert presentations, forums for discussion (meetings, workshops), responding to information requests.

			forests.				
CEI-Bois	Yes, in cooperation with FBI Core Group and Ad Hoc strategies	Members, policy makers	Forest products are 100% renewable and are produced by an innovative and efficient industry	Standard mix, FBI Forum, FTP	Roadmap 2010	Ongoing and Ad Hoc	Yes, financial
CEPF	Yes, in cooperation with FBI Core Group and Ad Hoc strategies	Members, policy makers	Forest owners = taking care of forest; the chain from forest owner to product	Standard mix, FBI Forum, FTP		Ongoing and Ad Hoc	Yes, financial
IUFRO	In development	Research, policy	Policy relevant results	Standard mix, conferences	All its activities serve to manage the large network of research organizations	Starting up	Yes, financial
EFI	Yes (including implementation plan)	Research, policy	Policy relevant results	Standard mix, conferences, EU research projects and tenders		Ongoing	Yes, financial
FCN	For its members, yes	members	Best practices in communication	Working papers	PR-toolkit for professionals, exchange of experience during events	Ongoing	Voluntary manpower
FCNBFRI	For the SNS, yes	Research-members	Best practices in communication	Forum meeting	Exchange of experience during events	???	Voluntary manpower

### 4.3.2 Communication Strategies

#### *Problem situation and goals for communication*

A number of central problems lie at the basis of the forest sector's raised awareness for improving and increasing its communication activities. At the level of the European Union the forest sector's main concern is the lack of a structural approach to forest policy, due to the fragmentation of EU institutions (Hogl 2000, Chaytor 2001) and lack of mention of the sector in the Treaty of Rome. Although the prime responsibility for forest issues lies with the Member States, a clear policy framework for forest issues would benefit forests, forestry and forest industries. A trigger factor here is probably the increased importance of other sectors in relation to forest policy (Montalembert 1995, Buchy and Hoverman 2000). The forest sector Advocacy Coalition (Hogl 2000) is dependent on a host of other Advocacy Coalitions.

A related problem is the difficulty to reach those other sectors. For the most relevant Directorates General (DGs) at the European Commission (COM) – the DGs Enterprise (ENTR), Agriculture (AGRI), and Environment (ENV) – this problem might not be too grave, because of a certain degree of coordination of activities, via the Interservice Group on Forests and informal communication structures within the Commission. Yet on the other hand, it demands a great deal of effort for the relatively small group of people working on forest issues at the COM to maintain contact with the other relevant policy areas within the COM – *there are only so many meetings you can attend*.

Establishing contact with the European Council and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) is more difficult, although informal contacts are of course possible – depending on personal networks – the normal medium of communication runs via “communications from the Commission to the Council and the Parliament”. More frequent contact between the COM and European Parliament would thus be regarded as an improvement. It has to be said that the FBI umbrella federations are putting some effort in reaching MEPs – especially “original, informal and surprising” ways seem to have some result.

The contact between forest-based industry federations at the EU level and the COM, i.e. DGs ENTR, AGRI, and ENV, is close and especially the Forest Based Industries (FBI) Working Group on Communication has proven essential for strengthening contact with the COM. However, in the light of the foreseen increasing importance of the European Parliament, it is not easy for the FBI federations to strengthen contact with MEPs. Although some contact has been established, it appears to remain a struggle to interest MEPs for forest issues; only a limited number of MEPs has a clearly expressed interest in forest issues. Perhaps one could even speak of lobbying fatigue: so many other sectors are lobbying with MEPs, making difficult to catch MEPs interest for forest issues.

A second difficulty for the forest sector is the image problem the forest-based industries have (DG Enterprise 2002, Rametsteiner and Kraxner 2003). Although forests have a very positive image when it comes to people's personal experiences, the (media-induced) image people have of the well-being of forests is quite negative. In spite of the actual state of Europe's forests – a steady increase of forest cover and especially of growing stock – public opinion is still negative. On the foreground of recollection are the elements: forest dieback and damage to forests. It is – empirically proven – a steady element of the collective frame of reference that the forest is in danger. Besides collective guilt (air pollution, climate change) also economic self-interest is suspected of being one of the causes for the (perceived) endangered situation of the forest. As an indication for this ‘human guilt’ one only has to think of concepts like deforestation and destruction. Only a small part of the public recalls positive elements, e.g. on the usage of wood. Research has

shown (Suda and Schaffner 2004) that the image of wood as a natural product is good. Products are, as is normal in a society with a division of labour, usually decoupled – the *slaughterhouse paradox* (Suda and Schaffner 2004). People consider wood a good product and feel very positive about it; they consider forestry as a necessity to maintain the forest, but they have negative feelings towards the forest industry. In short, they seem not to be able to make the link between forests and wood. Because the various actors in the forest sector are highly interlinked and their existence depends on each other – the chain between forest owners/managers, harvesters, and forest-based industry – it is important for the whole sector to improve the image of the forest-based industry. In order to receive a social license to operate this image problem has to be solved (Karvonen 2004). Countering these image problems has come to be at the core of the forest sector's communication strategies, as far as these organizations actually have communication strategies.

Related to the image problem of the forest-based industries (FBI) is the role environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (eNGOs) have played in forming the public's image of the forest industry. To a certain extent it can be stated that the forest sector felt threatened by the communicative power of eNGOs. The forest sector felt pressed in a corner, and was only able to communicate reactively – give comments on eNGO statements – instead of using the same strategies as eNGOs – to communicate proactively (Anderson et al. 1998). It has to be stated here that the forest industry is increasingly, yet not very often, engaging in joint projects with eNGOs.

The forest sector recognizes the importance of meeting society's demand – using forests to support societal development. The prerequisite is to know what society wants. Exactly here is where the bottleneck has been for a long time. The reason is that the forest sector for a long time mainly communicated one-way, simply spreading information – instrumental communication (Aarts and Van Woerkum 2000). In spite of growing awareness of the necessity for two-way communication with other sectors and stakeholders – to truly understand the world outside the sector and to “grow” understanding for the forest sector – still the forest sector's communication mix contains a large portion of one-way, information distribution. In order to learn which opinions live in society only true communication – listening as well as speaking – can give answers.

In short, the overall goals of the forest sector are in the first place to achieve an attitude change in the general public – a positive view on the whole forest sector – and of the policy makers/administrators/officials in other sectors – to see the necessity of building a clear policy framework for forest issues. Maybe it is not realized enough yet that in order to achieve these goals a real effort has to be made to create the circumstances in which the forest sector can engage in two-way communication processes with the most relevant actors from other sectors – policy makers as well as interest representation groups. Only instrumental communication (or lobbying activities for that matter) is maybe not sufficient to truly interest other sectors, let alone the public at large, in a long-term dialogue with the forest sector and to involve them in a process of mutual exchange and joint meaning creation.

### **4.3.3 Communication Process**

#### *Theoretical considerations*

As discussed in the Theoretical chapter, a communication process, described as simply as possible, has at least four elements: a source, a message, a medium, and a receiver (Dretske 1999), or five elements when taking into account a possible source of disruption

(Shannon and Weaver 1949). One also has to bear in mind that communication should be regarded in context of the process of meaning-creation (Rosengren 2000). In turn, this process can be regarded as depending on *internal context* – mainly determined by the addressee's experience, knowledge and attitudes – and the *external context*, which is primarily defined by the specific situational and social setting, influence communication (Pregernig 2000; Innes 1999). In addition, the process of perceiving and processing information takes place interactively and multi-dimensionally (Merten 1999). A communication process is furthermore subject to a number of disturbances: *selective exposure, selective perception, selective attention, selective acceptance*, and finally, if our message has passed all these obstacles and the receiver agrees, we still cannot be sure that he will react in the way the sender intended (Jones-Walters 2000).

### *Target groups*

A first step towards making communication succeed is to identify target groups. Only through identifying target groups and adapting message and approach (medium of communication) the success-rate of communication – to truly reach your target groups – can be improved. This holds true for both one-way, as well as the nowadays more favoured two-way communication. Once it is clear which target groups one wants to reach it is necessary to first identify the needs of that target group, and consequently adapt message and approach. Although the ideal situation would be to reach the whole society and to make sure that everyone has a positive image of the forest sector, this is not possible. First of all you cannot reach everyone. Secondly, you can most certainly not achieve an attitude change in everyone. Society cannot be seen as a whole; society is a complex build up of many, many different groups; the social system is not a unity (Röling 1988). Logically, some groups are more relevant to the forest sector than others. After these groups have been identified, one has to start thinking how to reach them, directly or indirectly (cf. the two-step flow model). The model presented by Van Woerkum et al. (1999) can serve as a basis for identifying the major target groups out of the pool of all possible stakeholders:

- Conditional relation groups; e.g. officials from other policy sectors. At the EU level this refers to officials at the COM and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs); at the UN level this refers to officials from other FAO and UNECE institutions<sup>33</sup>.
- Input relation groups; e.g. those groups that may provide new employees for the forest sector (forestry schools, forest science etc.)
- Output relation groups; e.g. customers of wood-products, like architects, builders, private persons etc.
- Relation groups with similar goals; refers to sector internal communication
- Normative relation groups; e.g. the media, eNGOs, labour unions etc.

Furthermore, it might be wise to identify opinion leaders in each of the target groups (Rogers 1995), and to focus communication efforts on these people, who in turn can reach (and maybe try to convince) the rest of “their” group.

As stated earlier, sector internal communication (between umbrella federations and governmental bodies at the EU level) is well developed; in other words, an active communication process exists for (some) conditional relation groups and groups with similar goals. Communication – through formal and informal structures – is frequent.

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<sup>33</sup> See the discussion on which actors are considered “policy makers” in the paragraph titled “Communication between formal policy makers and bureaucracy” in the Theoretical Background chapter, as well as Footnote #7 in the Framework and Methodology Chapter.

Lobbying activities have taken the form of more “standardized” relations, although, from a theoretical perspective, lobbying is, in essence, interaction between organizational representatives and governmental and parliamentary decision-makers (Jaatinen 1999). The above mainly holds true for relations in the EU area, since the survey indicated that communication with UNECE/FAO institutions is less strongly developed, yet still relatively frequent. This distinction becomes apparent when looking at Figure 12 (EU cooperation structures) and Figure 13 (UNECE/FAO cooperation structures); the two Figures could not be united because of a clear lack of overlap. What is meant with the latter statement is that EU bodies and Forest Based Industry (FBI) and related federations are involved in multiple cooperation/negotiation structures in various compositions. Cooperation structures at the UNECE/FAO level show only limited direct involvement of EU institutions and FBI and related federations. However, at the individual level, representatives might be involved in the UNECE/FAO structures (e.g. in the Teams of Specialists).

To sum up, sector internal communication can be characterized by lobbying as well as two-way joint communication, which means that the different actors understand each other very well and that, in spite of differences of interest, they form one advocacy coalition.

As for communication with other sectors (input-, output- and normative relation groups), this requires even more effort from the side of the forest sector. Although the institutions responsible for forest policy making *sensu stricto* have increased their profile and are trying to gain the interest of the institutions responsible for other sectoral policies (e.g. through spreading information on what it is they are actually doing), communication is still not very frequent. The major difficulty, as stressed before, is to get other decision-makers interested in forest issues.

For the forest-based industry as well as for the COM, youth is an important target group (see for instance the discussion on the “Opportunities for Generations” initiative), an important reason being that today’s youth will be the FBI sector’s future workers. This becomes especially relevant when seen in the light of the negative image the FBI sector has as an employer<sup>34</sup>. One way to reach youth is through their schools, hence making it relevant to consider teachers as a target group. It has to be said here that the interviewees commonly agreed that youth initiatives are best started in cooperation with teachers from the very beginning – a mutual learning experience etc.

Another important target group is the media (journalists and editors), because through them the general public receives most of its information; in a certain sense one could say that the media are the opinion leaders, or maybe better, opinion formers. One of the difficulties is to get the media’s interest – contact between the forest sector and the more specialized media is quite frequent, but in order to reach outside the forest sector the general media is essential as an intermediary. The general media has a large array of possible topics to report on, and in general they do not consider forestry to be very interesting. To hire a PR professional is one step towards intensifying contacts (networking and personal contacts) with the media, another step might be to invite journalists and editors to excursions in the forest. With regard to the latter suggestion

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<sup>34</sup> Directorate General for Enterprise of the European Commission (2002). Perceptions of the wood-based industries: Qualitative study of the image of wood-based industries amongst the public in the Member States of the European Union. Enterprise Publications. Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: 71.

good examples of such a visual approach stem from Canada, where the State Forest Service has taken journalists and editors into the forests to show them how sustainable forestry is (showing rejuvenation after clear-cut). Another example stems from Finland, where the Finnish Forest Association organizes information meetings for journalists to provide them with background information on those forest-related issues that have more media interest (e.g. controversies between forestry and nature conservation). These examples can be seen as best practice with respect to fostering media relations.

Architects and builders form another target group. These groups are important because they influence for a large part the use of wood in construction. The COM (DG ENTR) and the FBI federations realize this and are now increasing contact with – at the European level – the Association of Architects. Organizing competitions for constructing buildings with wood, or making photo books of wooden buildings are good examples of trying to interest architects and builders. A point worth examining is what can be done to increase wood-construction education in the curricula of architects and builders.

In the light of the changes taking place in forestry curricula at universities across Europe – more and more focus is shifted towards environmental management in general – universities also form a target group. The COM (DG ENTR) is therefore planning a survey of forestry education across the EU member states. One of the topics worth studying is how much attention forestry curricula are currently paying to wood-technology, which is a very relevant field for the FBI sector in relation to the skills of its future employees.

ENGOs and the FBI sector are occasionally co-operating on project basis on SFM and certification issues. Such co-operation should be increased whenever possibly, because it benefits the relationship between the two, because it improves the image of the FBI sector, and because it can further the goals of both groups. For instance, in the case of certification it is important for the FBI and its customers (e.g. retailers) to participate in certification, firstly of course because they support the initiative, but also because they want to avoid being brought into the spot-light of negative attention by eNGOs – increasing public awareness on the importance of certified wood – if they would not comply. A difficulty here is that both actors have their own interests and goals and that these are not always compatible. ENGOs furthermore have their own interest at stake, namely their reason for existence; without controversies, public interest diminishes and the need to campaign and thus the relevance of eNGOs decreases.

It has to be mentioned that on an informal level the relationship between representatives from the FBI sector, the European Commission and those of eNGOs can be very good. Especially at the “Brussels level” the people that have something to do with forests meet regularly (at lobbying events, conferences, meetings etc.) and hence a ‘*everyone knows everyone*’ culture has evolved. It is also worthwhile noting that although umbrella organizations (like e.g. CEPI) sometimes might want to co-operate with eNGOs on project basis but lack the mandate from their member organizations to do so.

Up till recently one of the weaknesses in communication of the FBI sector with society was the contact with social circles (i.e. trade unions). Social aspects were no real priority to the FBI umbrella organizations, because most attention on the public agenda went to environmental issues. Now that attention on the public agenda has shifted a bit, also issues like social sustainability have become an issue for the FBI umbrella organizations.

Co-operation between the FBI sector and the Forest Research Community is increasing (which is stimulated by the European Commission); some of the FBI umbrella organizations are involved in research projects with forest research institutes. Again it has to be mentioned that informal, personal contacts between representatives of the FBI sector, the COM and forest research organizations (e.g. IUFRO and EFI) is good, they meet regularly (in Brussels or at other expert-type meetings).

Probably the most relevant and extensive initiative in respect to the relationship between FBI, COM and forest research is the recently introduced “Forest-based Sector Technology Platform”, which was instigated by the major FBI umbrella organizations (CEPI, CEI-Bois and CEPF) and launched at their Forest Based Industry Forum (15<sup>th</sup> of February 2005). What remains to be seen, however, is what use this platform will have in strengthening communication with other stakeholders outside the sector core (e.g. environmental and social NGOs, policy makers from other sectors, etc.).

A question the FBI could ask itself is: *Do individual industries know of research work done by forest research institutes, which could benefit them?* In theory such research should be channelled to the individual industries through their federations that in turn might receive this information from their umbrella association at the Brussels level.

A question the forest research community could ask itself is: *Are we actively doing something to get our work to become noticed?* To make it easier for policy makers/administrators/officials and FBI alike to benefit from the work done by research institutes these institutes should present their results in an easily digestible and understandable way.

To sum up sector external communication: although the forest sector is trying to start up dialogues with other sectors and stakeholders – in the form of two-way joint communication processes – the major part of external communication still takes the form of one-way informing campaigns – public relations (Moss 1999, van Ruler and Verčič 2001). The latter applies especially for industry led initiatives aimed at the broader public. The forest sector does realize that the identification of specific target groups followed by the start up of two-way communication processes is more likely to have a long-lasting success – get the messages of the sector across. Coordination and start up of cooperation are however, at the European level, perceived as difficult.

### *Messages*

Whether or not one can reach your target groups depends on your message and which medium one chooses. When choosing ones messages one has to, in the first place, make sure that the target group is able to receive and understand the message, and the message has to be of interest to the target group (Habermas 1976, Jones-Walters 2000). These requirements seem to trouble the forest sector. Some of its messages seem to be too difficult for large audiences to understand them. Sometimes the forest sector is not regarded a trustworthy messenger (Rametsteiner and Kraxner 2003). Other messages simply do not interest the target groups, quite logical in our current information-rich society. In order for message to be picked up, they have to jump out from the flood of other signals flying around in the media, and they have to fit in the receiver’s frame of reference.

A start for any cooperation initiative between organizations, especially in the case of such a heterogeneous group as the forest sector (owners, managers, harvesters, processing



industry, policy makers/administrators etc. at various levels and institutions, science) should be the search for joint messages or joint interests to fuel messages.

One of the messages the COM tries to put forward to the Council and the EP is that there is a need for a more structured approach for forest issues at the EU level – an approach that clearly remains multifunctional and is nationally adjustable. Another expressed need is to try to go one step further than adopting resolutions declaring intentions, thereby coming to a working system (including objectives, deadlines and reporting). Whether these messages are picked up depends on the persistence of the senders, because it is clear that they are not the only ones who try to influence the Council and the EP.

Forest policy makers/administrators/officials (mainly the relevant DGs at the COM and the UNECE/FAO Timber Branch) also want to make a larger audience of stakeholders, as well as other policy areas at their own institutions, understand what it actually is that they are doing (which comes close to PR). In order to do so the UNECE/FAO Timber Branch (TB) has developed a communication strategy, which includes for instance a listing of all the actors relevant for the TB and the messages the TB wants to spread to them. The FBI working group, initiated by DG ENTR, already has such a communication strategy. Individually, CEPI has carried out a study of the organization's own target groups and its messages. CEI-Bois has also identified its goals for the coming years in its Roadmap 2010, and paid some attention to communication. All in all, these are interesting and valuable initiatives. Yet, it remains to be seen whether one-way, instrumental communication tools – which often form a large part of communication strategies – are sufficient to do so.

A commonly agreed upon opinion in the forest sector is that there is a wide range of messages that can be spread to communicate the image of the forest sector, but they basically come down to giving an answer to the following question:

*Why should trees be cut?*

Put more elaborately:

*Why should forests serve both economic as well as social and environmental functions, and what are the trade-offs/compromises to be made?*

In order to reach a broader public, national FBI organizations and other relevant organizations (e.g. forester's organizations, state forestry services etc.) are starting to use simple messages that evoke positive images – emotion being an important concept here<sup>35</sup>. For example:

- *More wood is growing than is being cut*
- *Forests sequester CO<sub>2</sub> – combat climate change*
- *Wood is recyclable*
- *Wood is a sustainable, strong yet flexible, construction material*

It has, for instance, proven difficult to communicate to the broad public that Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) is working in the EU 25. Foresters understand the term SFM, but it needs thorough and simple explaining to laymen. Another example: although forest cover in the EU 25 is increasing, it is still necessary to raise public awareness of this fact. The word “fact” is exactly where one of the communicative problems has laid for a long

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<sup>35</sup> For the author it remains unclear as to how much the EU level actors influenced these national initiatives.

time. Forest policy makers and FBI umbrella organizations increasingly understand that the majority of people are not interested in facts in the form of figures. It appears that more attractive media, especially visual methods, are needed to get to the public. Evoking emotion with “warm, friendly images” and using simple slogans are very useful in this respect – something Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) have understood already for a long time. A good example in this respect is the “Nordic Family Forestry” network ([www.nordicforestry.org](http://www.nordicforestry.org)), which uses images most people can relate to – everyone can place the concept family in his/her frame of reference – and which evokes positive feelings. In short, the incorporation of the basic elements required for creating meaning in communication processes (Burkart 1995, Suda and Schaffner, 2004) are a major challenge for the forest sector’s external communication.

### *Means of Communication*

It appeared from the interviews that there are quite some differences among the organizations concerning their ideas on communication. Communication activities as well as communication strategies are mainly concerned with planning instrumental communication; the informing of stakeholder groups through a mix of communication tools, like brochures, newsletters, websites, advertisements etc. Apparently these one-sided approaches to communication are still the most popular ways to spread ones messages. From the theoretical considerations it however follows that spreading is normally not automatically followed by reception, let alone understanding or even attitude change. Mutual understanding and long-term attitude change can normally only be achieved if a truly symmetric two-way communication process is in place (Aarts and Van Woerkum 2000). Logically, this type of process has limitations. Firstly, the number of participants should remain small in order for it to remain effective. Secondly, the selection of relevant participants and to get them interested in participation requires time and effort. In order strengthen cross-sectoral communication at the EU level such processes strongly depend on the people you manage to engage in them.

Concerning lobbying – efforts to influence political decision-making (Jaatinen 1999) – a distinction has to be made between sector internal and external. Internally, as stated earlier, lobbying has developed into a strong relationship between the COM, especially DG ENTR, and the FBI. External lobbying, for example with MEPs, has proven much more difficult. Through various activities the FBI federations try to reach decision-makers, but the competition with other sectors’ lobbying efforts is high and thus the fight for attention is a heavy one. Personal networks are essential in this respect, and contact to MEPs often runs indirectly: EU level FBI federations ask national level FBI federations to contact their national Member of the European Parliament.

Like almost every organization nowadays, also the forest sector uses a standard mix of instrumental communication tools: websites, brochures, newsletters, advertisements, press releases etc. The various organizations in the forest sector are quite active in their use of these tools, most likely because these tools are relatively “easy” to use, something that was admitted by some of the interviewees. It is unfortunately not possible right here to make a statement on the actual effect of these tools, because no formal evaluations have been carried out by the forest sector organizations. At the same time it has to be mentioned however that it is difficult (and subjective) to really estimate the effect of communication tools. Commonly accepted methods of evaluation are opinion polls (like DG ENTR’s 2002 perceptions study or the 2003 study by Rametsteiner and Kraxner) among the public conducted every few years in order to notice attitude changes; although there is considerable time-lag between information campaign and attitude change. A

general remark concerning these instrumental forms of communications is the need to make them as attractive as possible for the target group: easy to understand and visually attractive. In short, look at what professional marketers are doing, which again is an opinion agreed upon by most of the interviewees.

More interactive, but still instrumental in nature, are presentations, lectures etc. to inform smaller groups of people. The strength of this type of tools is that people then have “a face to connect to the story”. As mentioned before, events actually taking place in the forest are an attractive method to inform various target groups (youth, teachers, journalists) on forests, forestry and the forest industry. To really see what is going on in the forest, and not just reading or hearing about, is an asset for communicating outside the forest sector. Hence the marketing phrase *showing is better than telling*. A suggestion made in the interviews, in relation to educating youth about forests, that setting up a network for practical forestry schools could be an asset.

In line with the more classic communication models (magic bullet & two step flow theory) the media is seen as an important direct target group, through which larger audiences can be reached (indirectly). Strengthening ties with the media is therefore essential. Although relations between the FBI sector, the COM and the UNECE/FAO on the one hand, and the specialized and/or internal media are reasonable – meaning that contact may be relatively frequent, the depth of the relationship is mainly confined to the publishing of press releases – the relation with more general media – the media that reaches the target groups outside the sector – should be strengthened considerably. Concerning contact with the national media; this is the responsibility of the national FBI organizations, unless the issue is of European relevance. In order to do so one has to find a way to catch the interest of the general media, which admittedly can be difficult. In general a pool of press contacts would be very useful, which requires some active networking. A good example can be found in the achievements of the fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. The MCPFE organization employed a PR professional to foster the relationship with the general media. By professionalizing these efforts – having someone who knows what appeals to journalists – the MCPFE was able to receive relatively extensive media coverage.

An important initiative regarding networking activities in the forest sector is the Forest Academy Finland, where top-level decision-makers from the EU's new member states came together to learn from each other's experiences. Such initiatives certainly strengthen cooperation between member states' forest sectors, which is – apart from contact via the European level federations – not as strongly developed as communication within the forest sector at the European level (in “Brussels” and to a certain extent also at the UNECE/FAO). What it does not do is strengthening cross-sectoral (external) communication.

Another important initiative is the Forest Communicators Network (FCN) set up by the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the UNECE Timber Committee (TC). This network enables communication experts working in the forest sector (policy makers, industry, forestry organizations, researchers) to exchange experiences. Its weakness (and sometimes strength) is that it is voluntary. This means that all its members have to depend on their own funding for their contributions to the network. In respect to the apparent lack of funding for initiatives like the FCN it has to be mentioned that no voluntary network can exist without an active secretariat. Therefore the FCN would certainly benefit from

employing one fulltime person for secretariat duties – something many voluntary organizations actually do.

As regard symmetric two-way communication structures, where decision-makers and interest groups from various sectors come together and discuss forest issues are rare. One example stems from Finland where the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers (FFfDM) has successfully brought together the top-level decision-makers and representatives of a wide range of stakeholder groups, a similar example was found in the Austrian Forest Dialogue, and to some extent also in England's Forestry Forum. The only event at the European level, although not really cross-sectoral, that might come close to these initiatives is the newly established Technology Platform of the European Forest-Based Sector.

*Communicator - responsibilities and cooperation in communication*

At first sight the distribution of responsibilities between the different levels of actors in the forest sector seems obvious:

- Individual forestry and FBI companies are mainly communicating with their own customers, and their other relation groups that are essential for their existence. National interest representation federations lobby with national governmental bodies, negotiate with other interest representation groups to find joint positions, and they engage in campaigns to reach target groups apart from the individual companies' customers.
- National government's forestry departments negotiate with other policy departments to come to cross-sectoral policies.
- International federations lobby at the EU (and to some extent the FAO/UNECE) level, they try to develop frameworks for the national federations to operate in, in order to streamline national efforts, and they try to set up cooperation structures with other federations in order to strengthen their position.
- Departments dealing with forest issues at EU and UNECE/FAO institutions negotiate with other policy sectors at EU and UNECE/FAO institutions to streamline policies.

An ideal situation, recognized by all the major stakeholders of the FBI sector at the "Brussels level", would be to have sufficient resources (money, time, personnel) to engage in joint communication campaigns to improve the FBI sector's image with a broad audience. Several reasons make it difficult for such an ideal to become reality. Firstly, neither the FBI umbrella organizations in Brussels nor the COM (i.e. DG ENTR) have sufficient resources for this. Secondly, there is no such thing as a "European public". Target groups can best be identified at the national level, due to differences in national situation among EU Member States. Basically it comes down to a matter of subsidiarity: communication campaigns to reach a broad audience are the responsibility of the umbrella organizations' national members, whereas communication activities at the EU level are the responsibility of the umbrella organizations. As for the COM, one has to keep in mind that marketing is not a role for the COM, facilitating communication is.

Thus, the umbrella organization and the COM (DG ENTR) are trying to provide the framework for communication campaigns, in which the national FBI organizations can act. National organization should be stimulated to follow up on the idea of providing simple messages to society, and certain specific target groups in particular (e.g. youth, builders, architects, "do it your-selves").

Although some examples of cooperation in forest sector communication can be found, most of these initiatives are, as stated repeatedly, merely informational campaigns. Maybe the EU level FBI federations could put more focus on committing their national partners to improve their communication with society.

Large enterprises are already communicating with society in their individual interest, but cooperation on behalf of the whole FBI sector at the national level is essential if one is aiming at increasing the image of the FBI sector. Some cooperation initiatives, like the national campaigns in the UK (Wood for Good) and France (le bois c'est essentiel), largely initiated by the Nordic Timber Council, have been started up some years ago. Other promotional campaigns have been mainly nationally initiated (e.g. ProHolz in Austria, although this initiative has now been extended to Italy).

A positive development is that focus is starting to shift towards strengthening cooperation within the sector, for example via the FBI Technology Platform, the Forest Communicators Network, the FBI Forum, the Forest Academy Finland, and the increased attention to sector-wide communication at the COM (e.g. the chapter on communication in the Forestry Strategy for the European Union<sup>5</sup>). Yet, truly cross-sectoral communication initiatives can only be found at the national level. Table 3 presents some of the examples of cooperation and networking in forest communication at both national and European level. In line with the remark above, box (A) is open. If this box (external communication at the European level) would to be filled with an example in the future, the forest sector would do good to first gain experience with *national-external* communication (B) and with *European-internal* communication (C). Once sufficient social capital (trust, networks, and shared views) has been created with other sectors at the European level an attempt can be made to utilize this social capital and formalize communication with other sectors, e.g. in the form of what is already happening in box (B) and (C). Table 4 presents a SWOT analysis of current European level communication.

**Table 3** Examples on existing cooperation and networking structures placed in the communication matrix National/European - External/Internal

	Communication and networking between actors from different <b>European</b> countries	Communication and networking between different actors within each country <b>nationally</b>
<b>External</b> communication between the forest sector and other sectors of society	??? ↑ <b>(A)</b>	← Examples: Forest Forum for Decision Makers (FIN) and the Walddialog (A) ↑ <b>(B)</b>
<b>Internal</b> communication between various actors within the forest sector	Example: Forest Academy Finland forums, Technology Platform of the European Forest-Based Sector ↑ <b>(C)</b>	← Examples: Cooperation between FBI actors in setting up PR campaigns – like in Wood for Good, ProHolz – or sectoral platforms where all forest sector actors come together. ↑ <b>(D)</b>

**Table 4** SWOT-analysis of Forest Sector Communication at the European level

<b><u>STRENGTHS</u></b>	<b><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></b>
<p><b>Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DG Enterprise has the strongest focus on forest communication in the EU (FBI Unit), including a communication strategy. This is shared by CEI-Bois, CEPI and CEPF</li> <li>- CEPI has a working programme on policy and messages, based on a study in 2004.</li> <li>- CEI-Bois has a strong strategic programme</li> <li>- UNECE/FAO Timber Branch has already carried out a study on its target groups and messages</li> <li>- EFI has a communication strategy with a more detailed implementation programme</li> </ul> <p><b>Target group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus is already placed on communication with youth, teachers, media, architects and builders, and universities</li> <li>- Relations with sectoral media are good</li> </ul> <p><b>Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive shift from facts to image creation is taking place</li> </ul> <p><b>Means of communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong internal lobbying between the FBI and COM</li> <li>- MCPFE a good example of success in employing a PR professional for relating with the general media</li> <li>- Forest Communicators Network has developed teaching tools to educate forestry professionals on communication (e.g. PR toolkit)</li> </ul> <p><b>Networking and co-operation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contact between forests-based industry federations and the COM (Agri, Env, Entr) is close, e.g. FBI Working Group on Communication</li> <li>- On an informal level the relationship between representatives of the FBI sector and eNGOs is relatively good</li> <li>- Forest Communicators Network activities</li> <li>- Increasing attention to sector-wide communication at the COM</li> <li>- Ties between UNECE/FAO and the EU are close in the field of statistics (e.g. via Eurostat)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear policy framework for forest issues is at least discussed</li> <li>- Recognition of the importance of meeting the society's demand</li> <li>- UNECE/FAO Timber Branch is preparing a communication strategy</li> <li>- IUFRO is preparing a communication strategy</li> <li>- The Forum of Communicators at Nordic and Baltic Forest Research Institute is preparing a communication strategy for the SNS</li> </ul> <p><b>Target group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved image of the FBI sector among the youth</li> <li>- General pool of press contacts</li> <li>- Improving interactive two-way communication with the society through identification of promising target groups (maybe serving as opinion-leaders)</li> </ul> <p><b>Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing focus on image and emotions</li> <li>- Messages are increasingly being adjusted to the target group (the sector realizes there is no "one-size fits-all" message)</li> </ul> <p><b>Means of communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest Academy Finland is a promising initiative for symmetric two-way intra-sectoral networking</li> <li>- FBI Technology Platform as a cross-sectoral initiative</li> </ul> <p><b>Networking and co-operation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased co-operation with eNGOs (e.g. certification issues)</li> <li>- Co-operation between the FBI sector and the forest research community is increasing (e.g. Technology Platform)</li> <li>- Co-operation within the sector is increasing (e.g. FBI Forum, Forest Academy Finland)</li> <li>- Strengthening cooperation between national forest sectors</li> </ul>

<b><u>WEAKNESSES</u></b>	<b><u>THREATS</u></b>
<p><b>Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of a structured approach to forest policy in the EU</li> <li>- No specific forest information units in the EU</li> <li>- Communication strategies are mainly concerned with planning instrumental communication</li> <li>- One-sided approaches are still most popular</li> <li>- On communication issues, DG Envi and DG Agri act mainly in relation to the Forest Strategy</li> <li>- Forest Communicators Network does not have a communication strategy for itself</li> <li>- General lack of resources for communication activities (e.g. FCN)</li> </ul> <p><b>Target group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is no such thing as the European audience (diverse target groups)</li> <li>- Difficulty to reach other sectors in the Commission</li> <li>- Difficulty to reach representatives of the European Parliament (lobbying fatigue)</li> <li>- Few initiatives for cross-sectoral dialogues</li> <li>- Relations with the general media are weak</li> </ul> <p><b>Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor image of the FBI sector</li> <li>- Reactive communication against eNGOs</li> <li>- Social aspects have been overwhelmed by environmental aspects</li> </ul> <p><b>Means of communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One-sided communication is still most popular</li> <li>- Lobbying with MEPs has proven to be difficult</li> <li>- Poor knowledge on effectiveness of communication based on evaluations</li> <li>- Although communication is more interactive now, it is still instrumental by nature</li> </ul> <p><b>Networking and co-operation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Link between EU and UNECE/FAO appears not to be very strong concerning forestry issues (except for the field of statistics, where UNECE/FAO has close ties with Eurostat)</li> <li>- European level FBI organisations lack the mandate to co-operate with ENGOS on more than project basis</li> <li>- Co-operation mainly in info campaigns</li> <li>- Cooperation <b>between</b> national forest sectors is not so strongly developed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing focus on instrumental one-way styles of communication</li> <li>- Continuing to communicate reactively in stead of pro-actively</li> <li>- Failing to see that communication can only succeed if you truly understand what you want, what your target groups want, and how to reach and convince your target groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Target group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not focussing on specific target groups, and establishing a relationship with them</li> </ul> <p><b>Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not enough attention to the available common messages of the sector, but focus on individual interest</li> <li>- Continuing to be snowed under by the impact of eNGO messages</li> <li>- Keeping the focus on “dry” facts, in stead of attractively wrapped messages.</li> </ul> <p><b>Means of communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep working with the standard mix of instrumental tools, in stead of starting two-way joint communication processes</li> </ul> <p><b>Networking and co-operation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not being able to interest other sectors and stakeholder groups, due to lack of interest of these groups</li> </ul>

## 5 Country Case-studies

### 5.1 Austria

#### 5.1.1 Actors in the Austrian Forest Sector

In the following the most relevant actors in the Austrian forest sector will be discussed. The “core” network of Austrian forest politics is depicted in Figure 15.

Important to note is the fact that the Austrian forest policy network is very strong, in the sense that the relations between the major actors are strong and that interaction is very frequent – “everyone knows everyone” is an appropriate description.

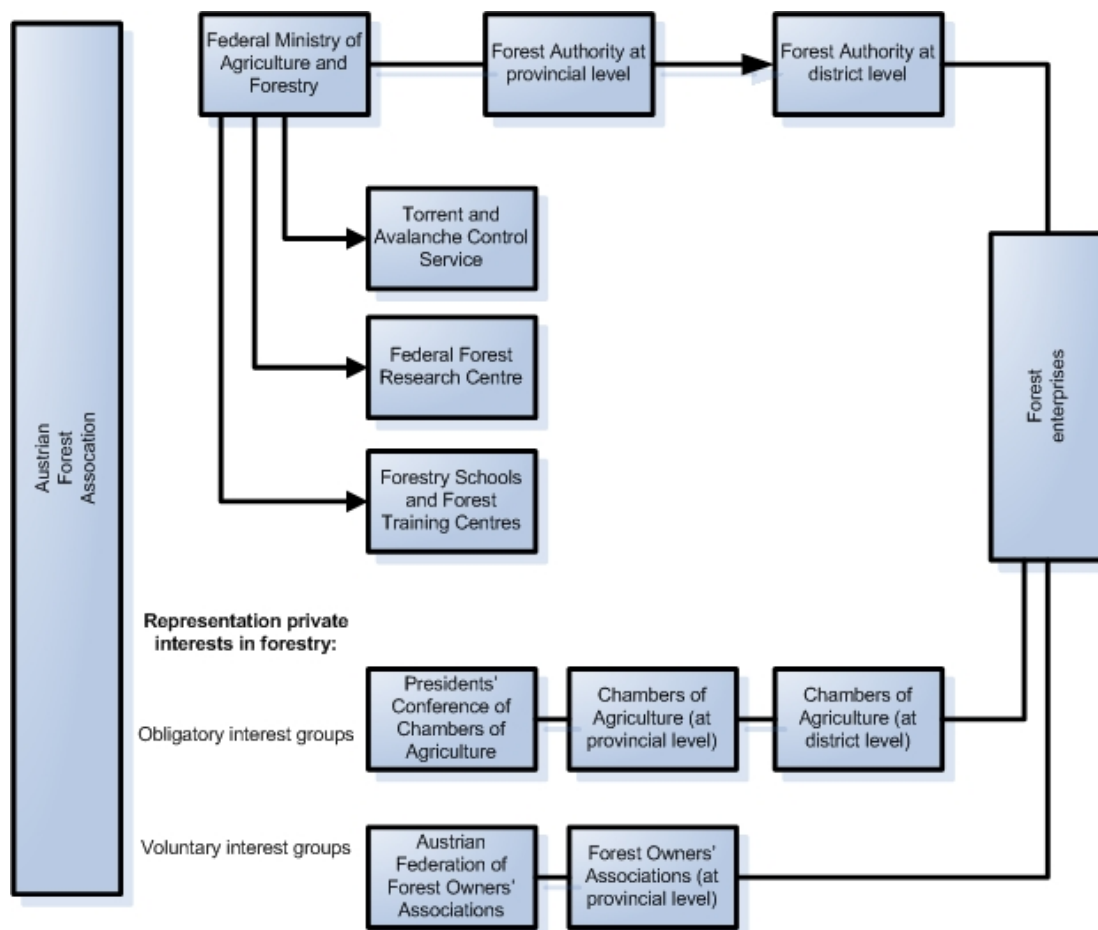


Figure 15 Forestry organizations in Austria (Source: Pregernig 1999).

#### Forest authority

There are three levels of forest administration in Austria. At *state* level, the **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water-management** (*Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft*) [forst.lebensministerium.at] has jurisdiction over forest-related matters. Within the ministry’s framework of activities, forestry is only of minor importance. In the *provinces*, the governor (*Landeshauptmann*) is the competent forest authority. The governor acts as general authority deciding not only on forest matters but also on other subjects like hunting, nature protection or trade and industry. A separate **forestry department** (*Landesforstdirektion*) assists the provincial



governor in forest-professional questions. Formally this department has only consulting functions. The same applies at the local level: the official in charge is the district commissioner (*Bezirkshauptmann*) who is assisted by a **forestry department** (*Bezirksforstinspektion*). One of the major duties of the forest authority is the implementation of the Forest Act. By performing its statutory tasks (supervision of the forest, elaboration of expert's opinions; extension service; assistance in the allocation of subsidies; survey of annual fellings), the forest authority gets in touch with its clientele, namely foresters and forestland owners. Due to this close relationship, the self-image of the civil servants changes from objective supervisor of forest management to intercessor and advocate of their clientele. Instead of trying to secure legal compliance on the part of the forest enterprises by exerting pressure on them, the forest authority tries to motivate the target group to act voluntarily in a lawful manner. Civil servants are on common ground with foresters and forest owners with a system of shared values and attitudes serving to harmonize conflicting interests. In addition to its duty to implement forest regulations, the forest authority, mainly the Federal Ministry, exerts strong influence on the *making* of forest-related laws. The Austrian Constitution obliges the administration to be perfectly neutral, in the sense that it should implement the political directives of parliament. In reality, bureaucracy is much more influential and its role in the making of laws is generally regarded as being very important (Pregernig 1999).

Both the Ministry's own website as well as its forest internet portal [[www.forstnet.at](http://www.forstnet.at)] are very extensive, and serve to inform on a wide range of forest-related issues (e.g. hunting, market situation, recreation, nature conservation). In addition, a large number of publications can be downloaded from the websites. The Ministry also has a very detailed communication strategy – *Manual für Informations- und Publizitätsmaßnahmen*. With regard to the dissemination of scientific research results, besides forest research at the Agricultural University in Vienna, most forest research is carried out and published by the Ministry's own research department (*Bundesamt und Forschungszentrum für Wald, BFW*).

The Ministry uses the following informational policy instruments (Czamutdzian 1999):

- National Forest Inventory and Austrian Forest Report
- Extension service of Forest Authority
- Forest Development Plan by the Forest Authority
- Hazard Zone Plans by TACS (Torrent and Avalanche Control Service)
- Protection Forests Plan by the Forest Authority together with TACS
- Expertise by the TACS on natural hazards

Furthermore, the Ministry utilizes a host of other communication tools (e.g. brochures, magazines, meetings, workshops). It has to be mentioned here that the general opinion within the Austrian forest sector is that informal contacts are perceived as being very important, a statement which has to be seen in the light of earlier given "everyone knows everyone" remark.

#### *Statutory interest groups*

In Austria, the representation of group interests is transferred from the state to self-governing bodies called "chambers" (*Kammern*). Chambers are statutory interest organizations, established by public law and with obligatory membership. Obligatory membership is intended to ensure that potential clashes of interest amongst the members are directed inwards and that a united front is projected outwards. By doing so, every chamber tries to secure a part of the public interest as an area of responsibility (Glück

1992; in Pregernig 1999). As central pillars of the social partnership, chambers are an omnipresent and powerful political player typical of the Austrian political system. Agricultural and forestry interests are looked after by the **Chambers of Agriculture** (*Landwirtschaftskammern*). All farm and forest owners are automatically considered a member of the Chambers of Agriculture, and have to pay membership dues. In return, each member may make use of the range of services offered by the Chambers. Since the foundation of agricultural interest organizations is in the jurisdiction of the federal states, Chambers of Agriculture as such exist only at the provincial level (with subordinate departments at district level). Nevertheless, the presidents of the state Chambers of Agriculture are informally organized at the state level. The **Presidents' Conference of Chambers of Agriculture** (*Präsidentenkonferenz der Landwirtschaftskammern*) [[www.agrar-net.at](http://www.agrar-net.at)] represents agrarian and forestry interests vis-à-vis other social interests within the social partnership. In Austria's forest politics the Presidents' Conference is a rather influential institution. The Chambers of Agriculture are engaged in two different statutory fields: (1) the representation of group interests, and (2) the consulting of foresters and forestland owners and the appropriation of subsidies. With that, the character of the chambers is to some extent ambivalent (Gerlich 1992; in Pregernig 1999): On the one hand, they act as powerful and effective lobbyists, and on the other hand, they behave as semi-public institutions which carry out state functions. In the administration of subsidies and in counseling, the Chambers of Agriculture co-operate with the forest authorities, with the forest administration advocating the implementation of the Forest Act in the public interest and the chambers predominantly arguing for the economic interests of the forest owners (Glück 1992; in Pregernig 1999). As constituent part of the social partnership, the Chambers of Agriculture, or rather the Presidents' Conference, are granted institutionalized influence on policy formulation. Already in the preparatory stage, they are informed on draft legislation and are allowed to comment on it. In addition, chambers often get the opportunity to send "their" experts into parliamentary subcommittees where draft bills are formulated and finally voted on.

In addition to various services for their members (representation, consulting, magazines etc.) the Chambers of Agriculture have an extensive internet portal [[www.agrar-net.at](http://www.agrar-net.at)] which is also available to the public (except from the intranet, which provides extra services to members].

#### *Voluntary interest groups*

In addition to statutory interest organizations, there is a network of interest groups based on voluntary membership. The most important voluntary interest groups in the Austrian forestry sector are the **Austrian Federation of Forest Owners' Associations** (*Hauptverband der Land- und Forstwirtschaftsbetriebe Österreichs*) [[www.landforstbetriebe.at](http://www.landforstbetriebe.at)] and the **Austrian Forest Association** (*Österreichischer Forstverein*) [[www.forstverein.at](http://www.forstverein.at)]. As a voluntary interest organization, the Austrian Federation of Forest Owners' Associations looks after the interests of private farm and forestland owners. The Federation has about 800 members representing a total forest area of some 800,000 hectares; thus, approximately 80% of larger estates actually join the association. The Federation aims at the support of owners and tenants of agricultural and forestry enterprises. It mainly tries to safeguard the rights of private ownership and to repulse any restrictions on the right of free disposal of private forest property. Though not officially intended to comment on draft legislation, the Federation actually has an effect on legislative and administrative occurrences because of its close co-operation with the authorities, chambers and other interest organizations (especially the Presidents'

Conference of Chambers of Agriculture). The second most powerful voluntary interest organization is the Austrian Forest Association. The Association is open to forest landowners as well as forest professionals working in private enterprises, chambers and the bureaucracy. If the approximately 210,000 owners of small farm forests are not taken into consideration, roughly two thirds of the potential members belong to the Association. For most forest professionals, membership is taken for granted; it results from tradition. The Association's statutory mission is rather comprehensive: the promotion of forestry in Austria. Public relations have always been an important task of the Forest Association – inwards, to find the “lowest common denominator” and outwards, to represent the “common position of forestry”. Annual meetings of the Association usually serve both purposes (Glück 1992; in Pregernig 1999). By using the instrument of “political language” (*Sprachregelung*) the different groups combined in the Association are oriented towards common forest-professional thinking (Glück and Pleschberger 1982; in Pregernig 1999). By commenting on draft bills and draft ordinances and through tight connections with other interest organizations, the Association mainly tries to forward the benefit of forest owners.

The Austrian Forest Association focuses on informing and educating those people responsible for Austria's forests (decision-makers, forest owners, forest managers) as well as the public on issues like sustainable use and multi-functionality. Another focuspoint is networking inside the sector in order to build a homogeneous position towards the other sectors and society at large. The Austrian Federation of Forest Owners' Associations and the Austrian Forest Association communicate with their members, with the rest of the forest policy network, and to some extent with the general public via all the obvious communication tools. For example:

- Publications
- Position papers
- Magazines
- Website (including discussion forum, intranet for members, downloadable documents etc.)
- Organizing meetings and conferences (i.e. the annual Forest Conference)
- Popular events (e.g. competitions)
- Face-to-face negotiations and presentation at meetings

Furthermore, the ties between the Austrian Federation of Forest Owners' Associations and the some of the popular press have a long tradition.

PapierHolz Austria is a wood purchasing association and sees itself as the connection between forest owners and the wood processing industry. The focal points of PapierHolz Austria's interests are the wood supply to its owners, the advancement and sustainable use of wood, and the optimization of wood logistics. The major target groups for communication are forest owners and the forest industry cluster. For these groups there are suitable communication fora available. Communication with the energy sector still has to be improved, one of the reasons for this new interest is the increasing importance of bioenergy use. Also the communication with eNGOs (mainly topic related communication) needs some improvement.

### 5.1.2 Networks – cooperation structures

#### *The Austrian Forest Dialogue*

The Austrian Forest Dialogue (*der Österreichische Walddialog*) [[www.walddialog.at](http://www.walddialog.at)] is a broad social dialogue process for the development of a National Forest Program for Austria, which has been called into life by the current Austrian minister of forestry. The central theme in this process is the search for solutions for the frequent conflicts of interests concerning forests. The Forest Dialogue is a long-term, continuous dialogue process. All interested organizations and persons are invited to participate. By the end of 2005 the first Austrian Forest Programme is to be ready.

The principles of the process can be described by the following keywords: Open, transparent, broad level of participation, holistic approach (taking into account all economic, ecological and social aspects of forests), cross-sectoral cooperation, and long-term.

The structure of the process is based on the following elements:

- Round table: is the centre of the Forest Dialogue; here the balancing of political interests takes place, led by the Minister of Forestry.
- Working groups: in order to keep the dialogue efficient, the wide range of themes for discussion is bundled into three different working groups.
- Coordination group: functions as an interface between the round table and the working groups.
- Process-management group: is led by the Ministry of Forest, Agriculture, Environment and Water management, and is supported in its tasks by a group of external, scientific advisors.

#### *ProHolz*

ProHolz Austria [[www.proholz.at](http://www.proholz.at)] is the consortium of the Austrian Forest and Wood Industry. Its goal is to promote the commercialization of wood in Austria and abroad. Ways to do so are marketing, advertising, and informing on wood. To inform the general public on forestry and wood products, but also targeting architects, constructors, and wood products producers abroad. ProHolz focuses on: image campaigns for forest industries, highlighting that forest utilization in terms of felling is a sustainable one; creating and maintaining platforms and networks; communicating on innovations in techniques and architecture.

#### Regular members

- Fachverband der Holzindustrie Österreichs (the Association of the Austrian Wood Industries )
- Bundesgremium des Holz- und Baustoffhandels (the National Board of the Wood and Construction-material Trade)

#### Supporting members

- Präsidentenkonferenz der Landwirtschaftskammern Österreichs (The Presidents' Conference of Chambers of Agriculture)
- Bundesinnung der Zimmermeister (the National Guild of Carpenters)
- Bundesinnung der Tischler (National Guild of Joiners)
- Interessenverbände der Holzwirtschaft (Timber Industry Associations)

The annual budget is about 2.5 million euro and is donated by the Austrian forest and wood industry, via their associations.

ProHolz Austria cooperates with Italian unions in promoting the use of wood in Italy via their joint initiative Promo Legno.

ProHolz is also a partner in the European Wood Initiative, which has been earlier in this report.

#### *Forestry Board Paper*

Within the FPP Forum for Forest, Board and Paper (*Kooperationsabkommen Forst Platte Papier - FPP*) [[www.fpp.at](http://www.fpp.at)], partners from forestry, the pulp and paper industry, and the chipboard and fibreboard industry are pursuing the mutual goal of sustainable and environmentally friendly utilization of the domestic timber supply:

- The Association of the Austrian Wood Industries (*Fachverband der Holzindustrie Österreichs*) [[www.holzindustrie.at](http://www.holzindustrie.at)] is the umbrella organisation of all industrial undertakings within the woodworking sector (except forestry).
- Austropapier – the Association of the Austrian Paper Industry (*Vereinigung der Österreichischen Papierindustrie*) [[www.austropapier.at](http://www.austropapier.at)] represents the interests of the paper and pulp industry along with the federal economic chamber and its paper industry.
- The chip- and fibreboard industry (*die Plattenindustrie*) [[www.platte.at/platte](http://www.platte.at/platte)]

In working groups with parity representation, problem-solving concepts and forms of cooperation are sought out; suggestions and recommendations are elaborated; and projects initiated. Substantiated publications and information should serve the FPP by increasing public awareness for the necessity of sustainable forest management in order to maintain healthy forest stands. On its website, FPP provides:

- Figures, facts and graphs on Forest and Wood in Austria
- Trade statistics
- Publications and press-statements
- A forest quiz
- Addresses and contact persons for forest-educational activities in Austria
- Procedure documentation for forest as a an educational theme in schools
- Publications

## 5.2 Finland

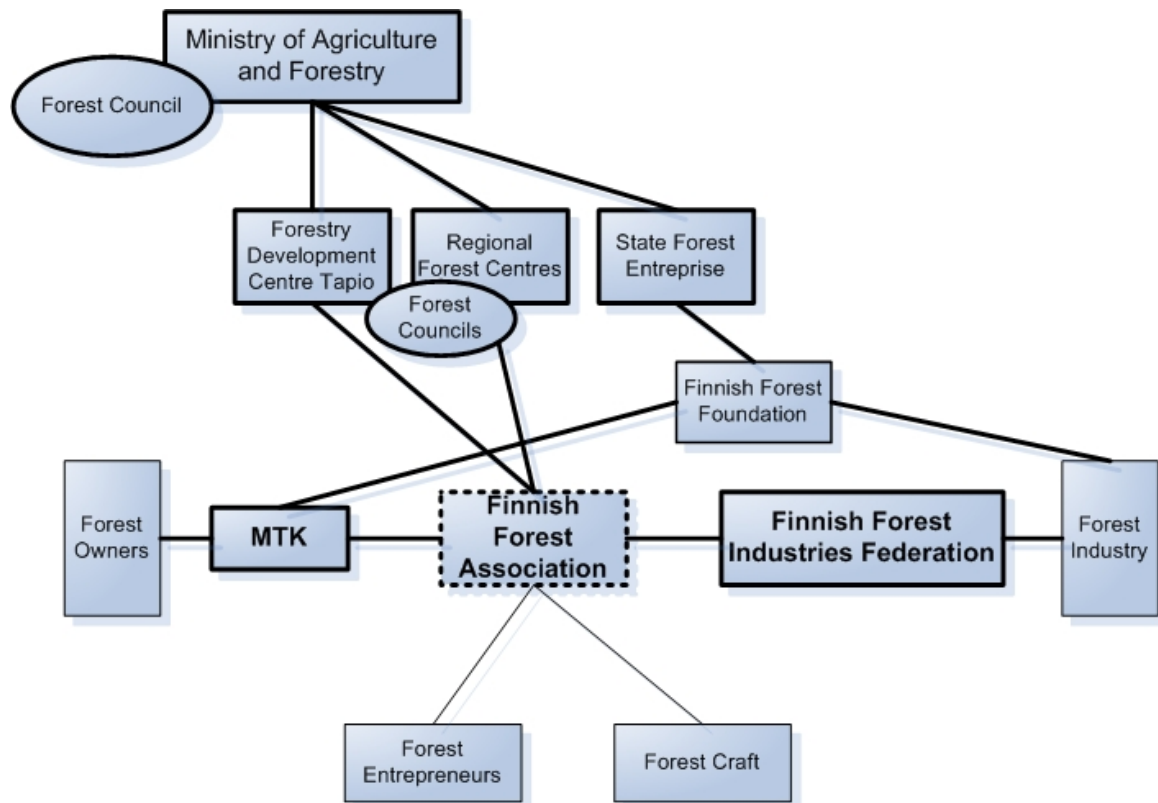
### 5.2.1 Actors in the Finnish Forest Sector

The question of forests and forest policies has clearly become more public than it has been in earlier decades. During the 1960s, 1970s and to some degrees still in the 1980s the power in the forest policies were in the hands of the few: the state, the forest industry and forest owners made the decisions. Due to the importance of forest sector to the national economy the major actors in public sector have been the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Finland (Hyttinen and Tikkanen, 1999). Today the group of stakeholders is more diverse. The role of private forest owners has become ever more important due to the societal change. Environmental organizations and other non-governmental organizations are also increasingly taking part in the forest discussion. However, there is still a central role for forest industries and forest owners as interest organizations, which is based on two major facts: the forest industry has been the leading export sector, and 80% of commercial round-wood comes from small, privately-owned family forests.

The coordination mechanisms between the major actors in forest policy have previously taken two main forms:

1. An ac hoc approach in the committee-type of policy reformulation and
2. The advisory board of forest policy, in association with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Both institutions are still functioning. As a new tool to balance socio-economic and ecological demands for forest-related benefits, the regional target programmes for forestry have been outlined. The two most recent and most important initiatives – where all major stakeholder groups from all relevant sectors come together – concerning forest policy-making are the National Forest Programme Finland negotiations (see later on in this chapter) and the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers (also discussed later on in this chapter). Figure 16 gives a simplified overview of the major actors in the Finnish forest sector.



**Figure 16** Finnish forest sector actors (simplified overview, after Hellström 2005, oral communication).

### *Forest authority*

The **Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry** (*Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö*) [www.mmm.fi], i.e. its Department of Forestry, directs and develops Finland's forest policy, promotes sustainable forest management, wood production and use of forest resources, and the protection of the forest's natural diversity. The Department of Forestry directs state-financed forest management and improvement projects, as well as forest planning and information. The department promotes the use of Finnish wood, directs forest research and the use and management of state forests.

The department is responsible for matters relating to forest protection, forest damage, forest processing, seeds, saplings and their trade, as well as the European Union's forest sector support and structural policy. The Department of Forestry is actively involved in international cooperation within the forest sector. The Department of Forestry's experts prepare Finland's international forest policy and Finland's position within the sphere of European Union, Nordic and bilateral cooperation in forest affairs. The department monitors the implementation of the forestry proposals of the UN Committee on Sustainable Development and the objectives of European Conferences of Forestry Ministers.

Regarding communication on forests the following two actors – falling under the responsibility of the Ministry – are also of relevance.

The **Forest Centres - The Finnish Regional Forestry Network** (*Metsäkeskus*) is the organization responsible for the practical implementation of the forest policy in its region. There are a total of 13 Forestry Centers subordinate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The centers are responsible for promoting sustainable forest management and utilization in their regions, as well as for supervising forest legislation. They also distribute public financial support for forest owners.

In drawing up the programme, the Forestry Centre will cooperate with the parties representing forestry in the area and with other relevant parties. Forest owners, forest industry, forestry entrepreneurs, loggers and other forest employees, public administration, municipalities, nature conservation and civic organizations in each area are included in the planning. Local residents will have the possibility to express their concerns at regional meetings. The Finnish Forest and Park Service, which is the body responsible for the administration of State-owned forests will assist in preparing a programme for the forests of the State and, correspondingly, companies help in creating a programme for the forests owned by companies (Hyttinen and Tikkanen 1999).

The **Forestry Development Centre – Tapio** (*Metsätalouden kehittämiskeskus Tapio*) offers a wide range of services and products for forest professionals for the sustainable management and use of forests. It also draws attention to issues that are important to forestry trade and takes initiative and makes proposals to promote forestry. Tapio has nearly one hundred forest experts who produce services related to forest management forest nature management and environmental management; the management of forest resource data; communications and marketing to forest owners and forest professionals; the development of quality and environmental systems and the development of data systems.

Its activities comprise:

- Expert and development services: Services are provided in the form of customer-specific projects or national coordination projects. Tapio's services include monitoring the quality of forest nature management and drafting recommendations for good forest management.
- Publications and web service: Tapio produces publications and brochures for forest professionals and to provide advice to forest owners. Its web service offers comprehensive information on forestry to forest professionals, forest owners, and the public at large.
- Training: Tapio offers open training (bringing together professionals from different businesses) and training targeted to individual customers.
- Data systems: Tapio develops and maintains customer data systems for forestry centres.

Forest Reflex (*Metsä vastaa*) is an internet site, closely connected to the Forestry Development Centre Tapio and the Forest Centres. The site specifically provides information for 1) forestry workers, 2) forest owners and 3) teachers and students.

### *State Forestry*

Until 1992 *Metsähallitus* was a typical central government agency with a number of public authority duties and limited decision-making powers. After a top-down organisation reform in 1987, *Metsähallitus* started a strategic development process, which resulted in the present form of a state enterprise, something much closer to a company than a government authority. The key instruments in this work were participation, transparency and commitment. *Metsähallitus* is now a dynamic state enterprise with multiple functions. It is in charge of the sustainable and profitable management of 9 million ha of state land, equal to 29% of Finland's land area. The working environment is very challenging, because *Metsähallitus* is in charge of both commercial forestry and nature protection. *Metsähallitus'* main values were defined in a participatory strategic process and they are: responsible management and use of natural resources, focus on



customers, welfare for employees, results by co-operation, and profitability. These values form the backbone of the working principles of the whole enterprise. Lately, Metsähallitus has been in the forefront of forest sector development in Finland in many respects, e.g. developing GIS applications; launching silvicultural guidelines with emphasis on ecological issues; applying landscape ecological planning and public participation in transparent planning processes; protection of forests in southern Finland, and inviting ENGOs to take part in a dialogue process regarding forest protection. In the future Metsähallitus will further strengthen its pioneering role as a provider of forestry and nature services.

Metsähallitus consists of the following business units:

- Forestry, which produces more than 90 per cent of Metsähallitus' revenues
- Wild North, providing eco-tourism services and rental accommodations
- Laatumaa, which specialises in plot and forest real estate business
- Morenia, specialising in soil resources business

Metsähallitus also has subsidiaries and affiliated companies:

- Forelia Oy produces tree seeds and seedlings for forests
- Foria-ÖBf Forstmanagement GmbH (50% ownership) offers international forest management services

Metsähallitus' public administration duties involve, among others, managing nature conservation and hiking areas, control of hunting and fishing rights and promoting conservation and recreational use of State lands and waters.

Both organizations utilize the standard mix of communication tools (website, publications, newsletters, press-releases etc.). Networking, however, is mainly done through personal contacts. The Ministry's position logically speaking evokes networking and lobbying, in the sense that the ministry is the central actor in policy-making. Metsähallitus is, just like the private Finnish forest industries and their federation, actively communicating in order to get a social license to operate from the public. In other words, making the public understand why trees should be cut. As an example of Metsähallitus' efforts in organizing public participation some figures: In the first round of the National Resource Planning (consisting of 7 regional plans covering whole Finland) between 1995 and 2000, Metsähallitus organized 161 events for the public, with a total number of 6,330 participants. In the same period, 170 stakeholder group meetings were organized with a total number of 402 stakeholder groups participating (Metsähallitus 2001).

Metsähallitus also communicates, in cooperation with the Finnish forest industries, to the customers of the forest industry. Although most of Metsähallitus' communication is national, the international aspect of its communication is increasing in importance. For example, due to recent conflicts with eNGOs in Lapland, Metsähallitus needed to get its messages across (to tell its side of the story) in the rest of Europe as well. However, it is difficult for an organization to reach foreign media, let alone a foreign public. One of Metsähallitus' attempts to create a network of contacts in other countries – such a network can be used to communicate through, in order to reach foreign media; communication to a national partner, who in turn communicates to its domestic media – is its involvement in the Annual Meeting of State Forestry Services in Europe. During that meeting experiences are exchanged and organizations learn from each other (benchmarking).

Regarding the recent conflicts in Northern Lapland it has to be said that Metsähallitus is very actively practising public participation in the area (70 public meetings since April 2003, and 4 wider stakeholder group meetings) and that Metsähallitus, the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation (FANC) and WWF Finland have a good relationship and that contact is very frequent.

#### *Interest representation bodies*

The **Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners MTK** (Maa- ja metsätaloustuottajain Keskusliitto) [www.mtk.fi] takes care of various interests and living conditions of farmers, forest owners, rural entrepreneurs and rural people. The Union monitors the agricultural policy of the EU and turns the needs and wishes of farmers, forest owners and rural entrepreneurs into proposals for the development of the countryside in the European Union. The Union also manages the profession's interests at the national level: markets for farm production, forestry issues, the concerns of businesses, taxation, financing, legal matters, environmental and agricultural policy, and organisational matters.

MTK's Forestry Council is the forest owners' national policy organisation. MTK's Forestry Council looks after private forest owners' interests by providing information on wood markets and prices, influencing forest policy and developing the operation of regional Forest Owners' Unions and local Forest Management Associations. The regional Forest Owners Unions' purpose is to develop private forestry and to look after private forest interest in the region, and to guide the Forest Management Associations operations. The Forest Management Associations assist forest owners in forest management and wood sales, carry out silvicultural and forest improvement work and raise the professional knowledge and skills of forest owners.

MTK's own newspaper, *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus*, comes out three times a week. The newspaper is Finland's sixth largest newspaper and is read by approximately 350,000 farmers, forest owners and other readers interested in rural affairs. Furthermore, MTK also has an internal paper, sends out newsletters, and issues press-releases. MTK also has a representative in Brussels who monitors the activities of the Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EC (COPA) and the General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the EC (COGECA) and represents Finnish organisations in them, when the need arises.

The **Finnish Forest Industries Federation (FFIF)** is an organization representing Finnish wood processing companies. The member companies produce paper and wood products in Finland and abroad and cover the entire Finnish pulp, paper and board industry and some 80 per cent of the wood product industry. The FFIF aims to promote the operational opportunities of its member companies and to develop the public image of the forest industry according to the policy defined by the members and in cooperation with European players in the field. The organization brings the views of the sector into both economic and social dialogue. The task of the organization is to acquire, analyse and distribute information on these issues to the members. Supervision of the interests at the international level aims to strengthen the position of the Finnish forest industry, particularly in Europe. The FFIF has a communication department dealing with domestic communication, communication on the market place, PR activities etc. Among FFIF's members are Finland's three biggest forest industry companies: **Metsäliitto**, **Stora Enso**, and **UPM Kymmene**. The Metsäliitto Cooperative – a cooperative organization for Finnish forest owners, with approximately 130,000 member – has a dual role: it acts as a wood procurement organisation for the Metsäliitto Group's mills, and, through its subsidiaries, it is engaged in the whole range of forest industry activities.

The Finnish Forest Industries Federation also has an office in Brussels to facilitate maintaining contacts with the institutions of the European Union. Furthermore, taking of the mix of communication tools (publications, press-releases, website, brochures), the FFIF has a communications department. As regards to international cooperation, FFIF is the Finnish partner in the Nordic Timber Council, which is engaged in information campaigns, mostly in the United Kingdom. The “big three” of the Finnish forest industry, mentioned earlier, have their own communication departments and strategies as well.

Special mention has to be made of the **Finnish Forest Foundation**, which provides communications and public relations funding for spokespeople for forest-based livelihoods. The foundation strives to promote the interests of forestry and the forest industry and the increased use of wood and wood-based products.

The objectives of the foundation are achieved by:

- distributing information on family forestry, forest reserves and forest management in Finland
- increasing awareness of Finnish forest industry products and innovations
- communication schemes that promote the increased use of wood.

To this end the foundation:

- awards grants, financial support and project funding
- undertakes research and development work and promotes public awareness of forestry and forest products

The foundation does not provide financial support for the marketing of individual companies or products. The foundation is a non-profit organisation and does not undertake business activities. The main source of financing for the Finnish Forest Foundation is the voluntary sales promotion fee, which is paid in connection with timber trade. The major forestry and forest industry federations are members of the FFF.

### 5.2.2 Networks – cooperation structures

*The Finnish Forest Association FFA* (Suomen Metsäyhdistys) [[www.smy.fi](http://www.smy.fi)] is a co-operation organization for the forestry field in Finland. The Finnish Forest Association promotes the sustainable and multiple-valued tending and use of forests. The primary task of the Finnish Forest Association is to give information on Finnish forests, forestry and the forest industry both in Finland and abroad. The members of the Association represent broadly the forest related organizations in Finland; e.g. forest industries, private forest owners, the state, research and education organizations and NGO's.

The Finnish Forest Association has a special mandate in Finland, it concentrates its communication on those communication areas where co-operation between forest organizations benefits the sectors – in the sense that co-operation should bring extra value; co-operation should enable the FFA to achieve something which its individual members cannot achieve.

The FFA has 3 core programs:

- *Communication on forests* to the general public, nationally and internationally. In this respect, especially FFA's actions concerning the media are important. FFA is in frequent contact with journalists and organizes seminars and trainings for journalists in order to inform them on forest issues. One of the reasons behind the strong focus on educating journalists is that by providing them with a solid knowledge base on forests,

forestry and forest industry, they are more likely to transmit an objective image of the forest sector to the public.

- *Schools and teachers.* Schools and teachers are the medium to reach children – tomorrow’s decision-makers. By teaching children, already at a young age, about all aspects of forests (e.g. the forest ecosystem, nature conservation, forest products, forestry, forest industry, and culture) they will later on in life have positive attitude (based on understanding) towards the forest sector. FFA reaches schools and teacher via its “Forest Learning Path” method, developed together with teachers. A related action is the annual, nation-wide competition for schoolchildren on forest knowledge.
- Forest Forum for Decision-Makers (see the paragraph on the FFfDM).

Forest.fi is a internet gateway to Finnish forests, forestry and the whole forest sector with information about forest practises and the importance of forests for the Finnish economy and the way of life. Forest.fi is a joint channel for the whole Finnish forest sector. The Finnish Forest Association (SMY) is responsible for the maintaining of these pages.

#### *Distribution of responsibilities*

Forest industry company:

- Promoting the own company and its products

FFIF:

- Communicate on sustainability and environmental issues in general, like certification, climate change etc., in order to improve the image of the Finnish forest industry
- Lobbying in Brussels
- Contact with foreign sister federations
- Promote timber use, e.g. in building
- Promote the “good employer” image

SMY:

- Take care of the image of Finnish forests abroad ([www.forest.fi](http://www.forest.fi))
- Cooperation with the ministry of Agriculture and Forestry & other players
- “Exploring opinions on the marketplace” e.g. to eNGOs opinions and possible reactions
- Maintaining contacts with and providing information to journalists (educational task)
- Organizing the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers
- Taking care of the communication on forests with teachers and schools

In short: Companies promote themselves and their own products; the FFIF promotes the whole industry and its products; and the SMY promotes the whole forest sector (Finland’s forests, forest industry, forest owners, forest workers, etc.)

From the viewpoint of the Finnish forest industry, cross-sectoral communication is good, in Finland and Sweden that is, because of the industry’s large network of contacts. The forest industry’s economic importance in Finland logically affects its position in policy-making and other sectors’ interest in having a good relationship with the forest sector.

#### *The Forest Forum for Decision-Makers (Päätäjien Metsäakatemia)*

The Forest Forum for Decision-Makers [<http://www.smy.fi/pma/eng/>] is a course and discussion forum on forest issues, directed at top-level decision-makers throughout the society. The Forum aims at improving the readiness of the participants to make far-reaching decisions on multi-dimensional and international forest issues. Additionally, the Forum aims at motivating and discovering new ways for the forest sector to support the resolution of societal problems of general importance.

In the Forum, economic, ecological, and social development strategies related to forests and the forest sector are discussed and developed openly in a communicative manner. New insight to the themes are sought through lectures, discussions and group work which may take place in seminar rooms, industrial plants as well as within the forest.

Experiences received from the Forest Forums suggest that the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers has genuine demand among decision-makers. Willingness to participate in the Forest Forums has been excellent. In fact, as requested by the participants of the Forest Forums, additional follow-up sessions are annually arranged for all those who have participated any of the Forest Forums.

Although it is, of course, difficult to point out that a certain decision in forest or other policy has been induced by the Forest Forum, the forest sector has been convinced that the substantial results have been worthy of the input. This is illustrated in the numerous official and unofficial recognition received from the Finnish forest sector (e.g. "Forest Action of the Year" prize by the Society of Finnish Professional Foresters).

The Forum has helped the forest sector to integrate their views and build joint strategies that are aligned with overall social development. A good example of this is the active involvement of the Forest Forum in dialogue related to the Finnish National Forest Programme during its preparation in 1998.

The opening up of the forest sector towards the rest of society has increased trust in and credibility of the forest sector. As a result, decision-makers within the FFDM network have become more interested in and receptive to forest related information offered by more traditional channels of information dissemination.

Although both elements of strategic goals – public relations and substantial issues – are of importance *per se*, they are very much interrelated. One would not work without the other. This is one important background for the success of the Forum. New ideas and integrated views to forest sector strategies have risen to the level of having potential impact on the development of the sector

The speeches, lectures, group work and discussion summaries of each forum are published and widely distributed to decision-makers throughout society.

#### *Forest Council (Metsäneuvosto)– National Forest Program*

Finland has in its national forest policy sought long-term solutions, the most important program being Finland's National Forest Program, sanctioned by the Government in March 1999. The NFP is the most comprehensive Finnish forest program to date. It recognizes the economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects of the sustainable utilization of the forests. In addition to national needs, it also meets the new demands of international forest policy.

The NFP is the most representative example of how different groups of the public can be incorporated into the decision-making. The NFP work was based on the regional forestry programs, on the one hand, and on the other ideas and initiatives received from various parties and at numerous information and feedback meetings. While preparing the program, the working groups consulted 38 experts, and the NFP was discussed in 59 Public forums with almost 3,000 participants. The public were also given the opportunity to influence the preparatory work via the Internet.

#### *Wood Wisdom and Wood Wisdom.net*

Wood Wisdom is a programme entity strengthening the knowledge base in the forest cluster across national borders and promoting the transfer of knowledge and technology to improve the competitiveness of the whole cluster.

The ongoing Finnish-Swedish Wood Material Science and Engineering Research Programme (2003-2006) is building a knowledge base and sustained research cooperation in the area of wood material science and engineering to enable development of innovative sustainable products, processes and services. Innovations and cooperation within the cluster and with other sectors will be needed to secure the future success of the forestry sector and forest-based industry.

Finland and Sweden, together with other European countries in the WoodWisdom-Net project, are also in the process of establishing a European wood material science programme, which will launch its first call in 2007. The countries involved also have their own national programmes in the field of wood material science and engineering.

The aim of the WoodWisdom-Net project is to develop collaboration between the European forestry sector and forest-based industry, the wood material research community and funding organizations by integrating research resources in different countries. Promoting the development of innovative forest-based products, processes and services, the collaboration will benefit Europe's citizens and strengthen the competitiveness of Europe's forest sector and forest-based industry.

The WoodWisdom-Net project, "Networking and integration of national programmes in the area of wood material science and engineering" (2004-2007), is designed to prepare and launch a joint, European Research and Technical Development (RTD) programme with common funding and administration in the year 2007.

The European collaboration in the WoodWisdom-Net project arises from the Finnish Forest Cluster Research Programme Wood Wisdom (1998-2001) and from the Finnish-Swedish co-funded Wood Material Science Research Programme (2003-2006).

The coordinator of the WoodWisdom-Net project is National Technology Agency of Finland (Tekes). Together 12 partners from five countries are participating in the project<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> Other participants are Academy of Finland and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland, The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning (Formas) and Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA), Danish Forest and Nature Agency (DFNA), Danish Technical Research Council (STVF), Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The Project Management Organisation Jülich (FZJ-PTJ) from Germany, The Research Council of Norway (RCN), Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee (SNS), Innovation Norway (INVANOR). The project also efforts to find new partners from other European countries.

## 5.3 Latvia

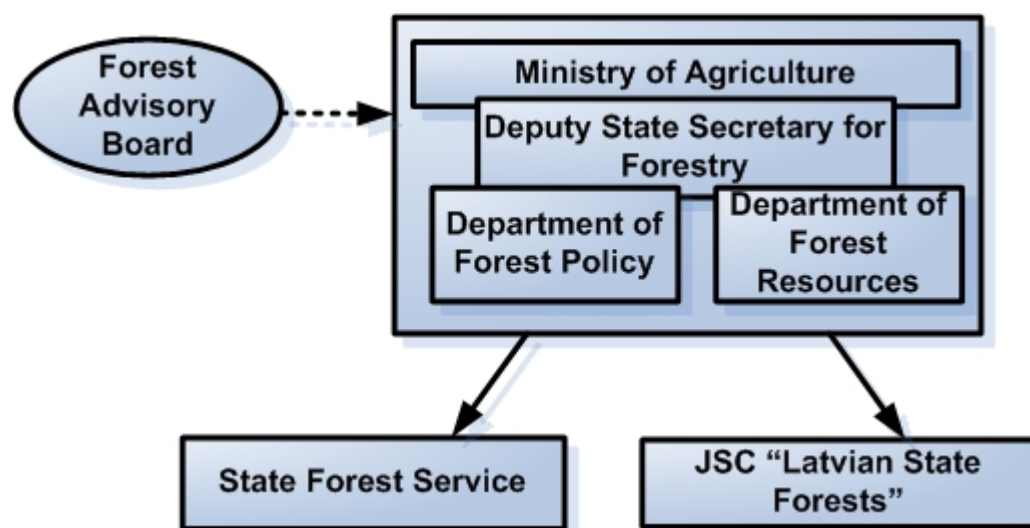
### 5.3.1 Actors in the Latvian Forest Sector

#### *State Actors*

The **Ministry of Agriculture** [www.zm.gov.lv] is a central executive institution, one whose primary goal is to elaborate national policies in the area of agriculture, forestry and fishing, to implement those policies in tandem with other government institutions and to co-ordinate the operations of these sectors. The Ministry's Forest Sector (FS) is made up of the **Department of Forest Policy** and the **Department of Forest Resources**, and their job is to ensure that norms and support functions in the forestry sector are implemented in a co-operated fashion. In collaboration with the interest groups of the forest sector FS realizes the following tasks:

- Works out the forest sector policy and the NFP, as well as the necessary legal acts supporting implementation of the above mentioned documents; co-ordinates the course of their putting into practice;
- Represents Latvia's forest sector in international organizations, processes and preparation of agreements;
- Coordinates international co-operation;
- Informs society of the development trends in forestry and the market of forest products.

The Ministry of Agriculture supervises the **State Forest Service**, and the state-owned **joint-stock company "Latvia's State Forests"** manages the national forests. The ministry of Agriculture controls all shares in the company. The **Forest Advisory Board** is a body representing various stakeholder groups (see the paragraph on the FAB).



**Figure 17** Governance in the Latvian forest sector

The **State Forest Service (Valsts meza dienests)** [www.vmd.gov.lv] is a civilian government institution which is under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, is responsible for the implementation of unified forestry policies in all of the country's forests, supervises the implementation of norms which regulate the management and use of the forest, and implements support programs that are aimed at ensuring sustainable forestry in Latvia. The State Forest Service consists of a central staff and 26 regional

units, each of which handles the functions of the State Forest Service in one of the country's 26 administrative districts. The employees of the State Forest Service are charged with ensuring that those who use the forest know about, understand and take into account the requirements of regulations, which govern the process, and that they make sure that good forestry principles are observed. Education among those who use the forest is a priority for the service. The State Forest Service is also the lead agency in monitoring fire safety and limiting fires in the country's forests<sup>37</sup>. The public requires objective information about forests and what is happening in the country's forests. The State Forest Service manages the forest register and ensures that norms and laws are obeyed. The **Joint-stock company Latvia's State Forests (Latvijas Valsts Meži, LVM)** [www.lvm.lv ] manages the forested properties which belong to the state and that can be used for commercial purposes. The LVM manages 1.6 million hectares of land, including 1.37 million hectares of forest. The LVM implements the state's interests in forest management, ensuring that the value of the forest is preserved and increased and that the state gets as much money as possible from the forest. In its economic operations, the LVM takes into account the social and ecological functions of the forest – those, which ensure the value of the surrounding environment, as well as the preservation and maintenance of important facilities of culture, history and recreation. The LVM operates in the entire cycle of the forest. It collects, processes and stores seed and grows saplings. That is the job for one of the LVM's structures, Seeds and Plants. The next phase is forest management throughout the full forestry cycle, and a structural unit called "Forest" handles this. This unit plants trees and then tends them until they grow to the point where they can be used. The unit also sells growing trees. Another structural unit, Round wood Supplies, prepares and sells round wood at its own facilities. The LVM is also engaged in a number of related areas of activity – recreation services, hunting services and sale of decorative plants. The volume that the LVM has to manage in the country's forests has increased by seven million cubic meters per year, while the cutting volume is always around four million cubic meters per year. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certifies all LVM-managed forests (André 1999; Ministry of Agriculture 2005; Norström and Gustafsson 2005).

#### *Interest representation*

**The Latvian Forest Industries Trade Union** is a voluntary, independent and democratic organization, one that works under the auspices of the Latvian constitution, Latvian law and the organization's own statutes. Members include representatives from logging, timber processing, pulp and paper, as well as other industries that are related to the forest sector. The trade union also supports the social and economic rights of its members and represents their interests.

**Forest Owners' Association of Latvia** is a cooperative society that was established in 1993 to enhance forest management and utilization, to facilitate the timber business and other forest-related businesses, to provide consultations, as well as education and training possibilities, and to stand up for the interests and rights of its members and other forest owners in Latvia. There are approximately 155,000 forest properties in Latvia, with over 100,000 owners. Some 40,000 individuals and legal entities have become supporting members of the organization and have made use of its services. Another 1,200 forest owners and business people are full members of the organization and make an investment

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<sup>37</sup> In order to increase the efficiency and save money, in a period of five years, the responsibility for fire monitoring will be passed over to the State Fire and Rescue Service.



in developing its commercial operations. These are the functions of the Latvia's Forest Owners' Association:

- Promotion of co-operation among forest owners and strengthening of their local organizations;
- Services to forest owners which are aimed at higher efficiency in forest use;
- Implementation of sustainable forestry methods, as well introduction of certification systems;
- Assistance for forest owners so that they can receive the necessary professional education and consultations.

The co-operative society "Latvia's Forest Owners' Association" also participates in various international co-operation and technical assistance projects and programmes which are aimed at promoting private forestry. It also seeks to strengthen contacts with forest owner associations in other countries, particularly in the Baltic Sea region.

**Latvian Forest Industry Federation** is an umbrella organization for the leading business associations in the forest sector – Latvijas Koks (Latvian Wood), Latvijas Mébeles (Latvian Furniture), the Latvian Timber Exporters' Association, the Association of Latvian Wood Processing Entrepreneurs and Exporters, the Latvian Union of Timber Harvesting Companies and the Latvian Association of Independent Timber Harvesting Companies. The federation was established so as to represent the interests of the Latvian forest and woodworking industries at the international level, as well as to develop and co-ordinate the activities of the various associations. The federation represents the interests of the Latvian forest and woodworking industry at the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries. It also works actively with government authorities and with professional and international organizations so as to promote the development of the various forestry-related industries in Latvia and to create secure economic conditions for them. The Latvian Forest Industry Federation is working on the wood usage promotion programme, the aim being to encourage the public to return to the environmentally friendly material that is timber, making use of it in all areas of life. All six of the federation's members are also represented on the Latvian Forest Advisory Board.

### 5.3.2 Networks – cooperation structures

#### *Latvian National Programme of the Forest Sector and Related Industries*

The Latvian Cabinet of Ministers approved a Concept of the Latvian National Programme of the Forest Sector and Related Industries, also called the Forest Cluster [[www.forestcluster.lv](http://www.forestcluster.lv)], on July 24, 2002. This is a medium-term programme, one that covers the period of time between 2004 and 2013, and it is a strategic development document. In accordance with Latvia's forest policy, the aim of the programme is to ensure sustainable management of Latvia's forests, as well as the development of the forest sector and the related industries in the context of overall economic development in Latvia. The duty for the national programme is to formulate strategic goals for the development of the forest sector and the related industries and to elaborate a detailed implementation programme, one that is balanced with the development of other sectors in the economy. Elements of the programme that are of relevance to communication are:

- Integration of educational and scientific level in the forest sector and related industries;
- Promotion of the use of timber in construction;
- Establishment of an information system for the forest sector and related industries, taking into account the principles of the Information Society and of E-management;

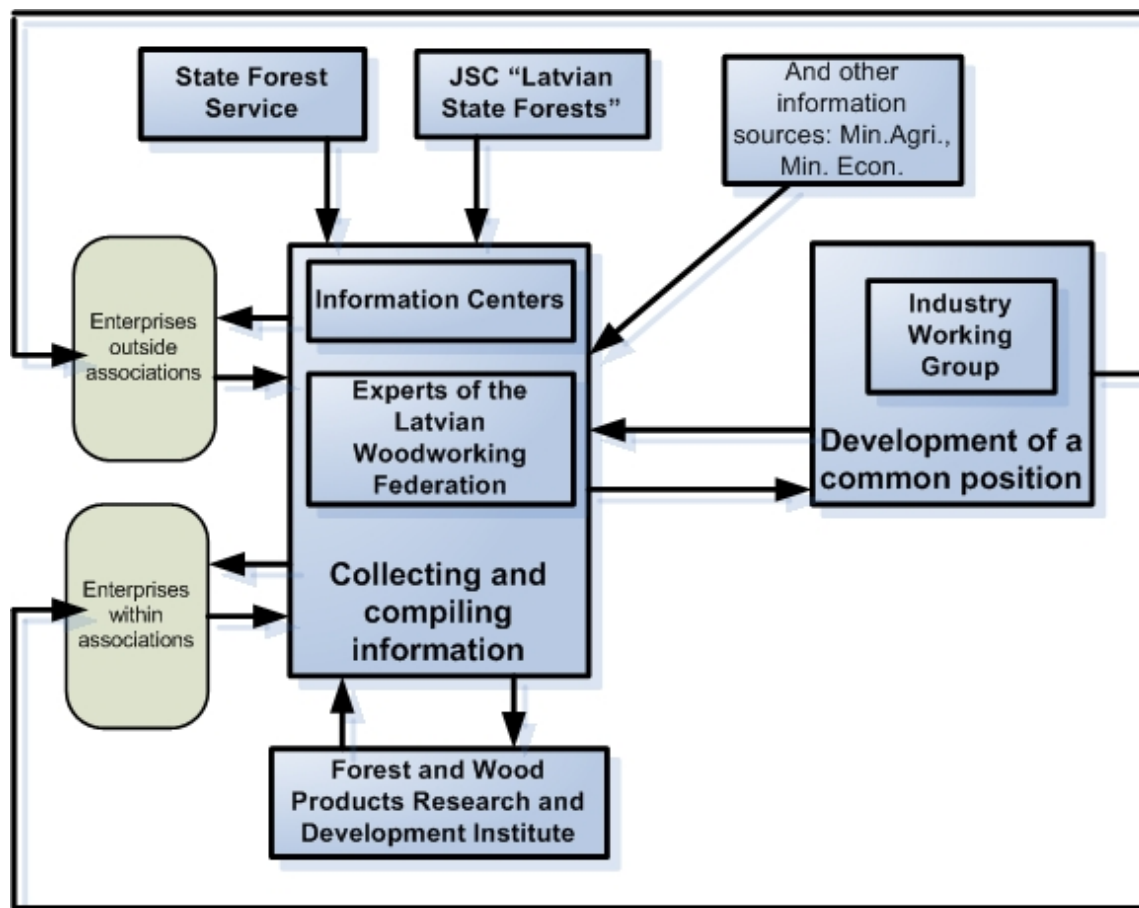
The Coordination Council of the Latvian Forest Sector and Related Industries Programme was formed with the Latvian Prime Minister's Decree No. 323 "On the Coordination Council of the Latvian National Programme of the Forest Sector and Related Industries", dated November 6, 2002, to coordinate development of the programme. The Coordination Council includes representatives from public organizations of forest industry and related industries, representatives from ministries and other state and municipal institutions (Aleksejenko, 2002).

At the start of the process in 2002 two steps were foreseen, which included the following initiatives:

1. Forest Cluster Knowledge and Information Centre, which has the following functions:
  - a. Information source - Collecting and providing information on forest cluster products, services companies for the internal market and external market;
  - b. Marketing activities - Develop, co-ordinate and manage country level positioning, marketing, sales promotion and image campaigns;
  - c. Market information - Analysis of statistical data, market intelligence;
  - d. Preparation activities for the second step - Preparation activities would include business plan development and pilot projects.
  
2. Forest Excellence Centre (science park) - Additionally to the competencies of the first Step Forest Excellence Centre would include:
  - a. Applied research projects;
  - b. Training on new technologies and developments, as well commodity training;
  - c. Promotion of wood application;
  - d. Consulting services;
  - e. Development of communicators;
  - f. Promotion of international standardisation (construction standardisation), testing;
  - g. International conferences

#### *Information flow in the Latvian Forest Sector*

Information flow is a topic of high relevance especially to the Latvian forest-based industries. Recently, a number of forest industry associations (amongst others the Latvian Woodworking Federation) presented an initiative for the establishment of work-groups with common interests and the improvement of information flow in the Latvian forest sector. Figure 18 gives an overview of the current information flows that have to be strengthened to the establishment of work-groups.



**Figure 18** Information flow in the Latvian Forest Sector

### *Cooperation through Forest Days*

Forest Days events have been held in Latvia every year since 1928. During the event, people plant trees and clean up forests. There are lectures and field trips. Public buildings, roads and rural homes are improved with new plantings. In order to make the coordination of Forest Days more successful, Latvia's Forest Advisory Board in 2002 set up a special work-group to organize the celebration. Its members come from a variety of institutions and organizations, and the work is coordinated by the Department of Forest Policy of the Ministry of Agriculture. There is extensive co-operation with the mass media so as to popularize the ideas that are behind Forest Days and to provide information about when and where the various events will take place.

The State Forest Service also played a role in Forest Days 2004, calling on forest owners to set new records in forest regeneration. The agency organized a programme that was called "No More Room for Garbage in the Forest!" With the help of schools, local governments and other partners, places in the forest that were polluted with garbage were identified, and one of the locations in each forest sector was cleaned up. Participants took photographs of the garbage and pollution, and some 200 sites all around Latvia were cleaned up. The main purpose of the programme was to call on people from various societal groups to take part in forest improvement, to help to develop greater responsibility among individuals and institutions on the subject of forest condition. The State Forest Service also organized seminars about the tending of young stands for private forest owners during Forest Days.

The joint stock company Latvia's State Forests (LVM), which manages all of Latvia's state-owned forests, was another active participant in Forest Days events this year. The agency helped people to gain a better understanding of processes that take place in the forest, about the great meaning of the forest as a renewable natural resource in the national economy, in employment and in the conservation and protection of natural diversity. In April and May, staff from eight of the LVM sectors worked with local residents and local governments to improve and regenerate the forest in more than 100 locations. People cleaned up the forest, gathered garbage, planted new stands of trees, installed birdcages in the forest, cleaned and improved recreational facilities and parks, and installed or improved information and educational trails.

The Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) worked together with "Latvia's Green Belt" to organize orienteering events which were aimed at focusing public attention on a clean and orderly environment. In co-operation with Stora Enso, trees were planted.

The Forest Owners Association of Latvia issued a challenge in the spring of 2004, calling on forest owners to regenerate their forests by planting saplings and by foresting land that is not used for agriculture. Forest Days events were organized at a variety of forest holdings, calling neighbors together to forest larger areas of land. This helped to strengthen co-operation and contacts. The job also involved consultants from the association. They offered a variety of practical advice in forest management, and people could exchange experiences in terms of the solutions that they had found to various problems. This meant that the forest-planting event was also an educational opportunity for all forest owners.

In 2004 Stora Enso worked with co-operation partners at the Forest Days to continue with its tradition of regeneration of privately owned forestland. The company also provided information to schoolchildren about the process of afforestation. The Ministry of Agriculture organized regional conferences, "Latvia's Countryside in Europe". There were work-groups on "Support for the Forest Sector" at all of the events, and delegates learned about the European Union's structural funds and the way in which these could be accessed. Specialists offered answers to all questions. Public information about the forest sector is disseminated regularly through press released, press conferences, brochures, as well as the annual report of the Ministry of Agriculture . A public opinion survey was organized to find out what people thought about the Forest Days event (Ministry of Agriculture 2005).

#### *Forest Advisory Board*

Latvia's Forest Advisory Board was established in 1998 for the following purposes:

- To co-ordinate the activities of state and public organizations in promoting the development of the forest sector in Latvia;
- To prepare and evaluate proposals and draft norms which regulate the forest sector;
- To evaluate the way in which other spheres, including international and bilateral norms and agreements, will affect the Latvian forest sector;
- To promote the development of the forest sector and the competitiveness of Latvian businesses in the international market;
- To ensure transparency in the resolution of the most important problems of the forest sector.

The council is an informational, consulting and co-ordinating institution which is aimed at establishing balanced development policies in the forest sector. The council's decisions are only recommendations. The chairman of the council is the Minister of Agriculture. These are the rights of the Latvia's Forest Advisory Board:

- To issue evaluations of norms that have to do with the forest sector’s development and operations;
- To be given a timely chance to study draft laws, norms, regulations and instructions that relate to the forest sector and to promote amendments to same;
- To demand all necessary information from the state and from the relevant non-governmental organisations;
- To propose awards for people who work in the forest sector for significant investments in the development of the sector in Latvia.

Latvia’s Forest Advisory Board has representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, the State Forest Service, Latvian State Forests and a wide range of stakeholders<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> The Latvian Forest Industries Trade Union, Latvia’s Forest Owners’ Association, The Latvian Forest Industry Federation, The Latvian State Forestry Research Institute “Silava”, Forest Faculty of the Latvian University of Agriculture, The Latvian Fund for Nature, The World Wide Fund for Nature, and The Latvian Ornithology Society.

## 5.4 United Kingdom

### 5.4.1 Actors in the United Kingdom's Forest Sector

#### *Government forestry bodies*

The *Forestry Commission* is the Government Department responsible for forestry policy throughout Great Britain. Forestry is a devolved matter. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has responsibility for forestry in England as well as certain activities such as international affairs and plant health which remain reserved by Westminster (central government). Scottish Ministers have responsibility for forestry in Scotland and the Welsh Assembly Government has responsibility for forestry in Wales.

*Forestry Commission England, Forestry Commission Scotland and Forestry Commission Wales* report directly to their appropriate Minister, providing advice on policy and implementing that policy within the relevant country. The Forestry Commission in each country is led by a Director who is also a member of the GB Board of Commissioners. This structure allows the Forestry Commission to focus more clearly on delivering the policies of the individual Governments while still having the ability to take a GB-wide approach to "cross-border" issues. The Commissioners receive external, independent advice on a range of key issues of interest to the forestry industry from the *Forestry Commissioners Advisory Panel*, which operates on a GB level. The Panel meets 3 times a year. The Panel consists of 15 non-executive members, who are appointed for a three year term and are selected from a comprehensive range of forestry related backgrounds.

Each of the countries has its own strategy and mission, and delivers the forestry policy of each country through specific objectives drawn from the country strategies. Delivery of the policy, as well as the progress measured against the strategy objectives, are overseen in each country by the Commission's National Committee for England, National Committee for Scotland and National Committee for Wales.

The Forestry Commission also has three executive agencies, which work to targets set by Commissioners and Ministers. Public forests, woodlands and other land are managed by two Forest Enterprise agencies – one in England and one in Scotland (currently there is no agency in Wales) – on behalf of the Forestry Commission in those countries. *Forest Research* is a GB-wide agency, which aims to deliver high-quality scientific research and surveys, to inform the development of forestry policies and practices, and promote high standards of sustainable forest management (Forestry Commission 1998 and 2005a; Forestry Enterprise England 2003).

In addition, the ministry of agriculture (and its Welsh and Scottish counterparts) has a second route of influence, through the growing importance of farm forestry. Its advisory service to farmers now incorporates some forestry expertise.

The *Forestry Commission* has a number of different communication strategies due to the fact that forestry is a devolved issue in the United Kingdom and there are actually 3 forestry commissions (England, Wales, Scotland) plus duties at the 'Great Britain' level. The goals of these organizations may differ – as they are prone to regional/local circumstances and policy directions – therefore their communication strategies, as well as the level of development of such a communication strategy, may differ between the 3 organizations. Each of the organizations has a large range of audiences, ranging e.g. from holiday homes to timber trade. Hence, there is an equally large range of messages, adapted to the issues at hand. However, it has to be said that the Forestry Commission has

a certain degree of overall strategy across Great Britain, their extensive and interactive website being a prime example.

The most important communication tools for the FC to reach the public comprise:

- Free media
- Face-to-face communication via guided walks in the forest
- Internet (the extensive and interactive [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk) website)
- Forest Life Magazine (soft information, easy reading, “nice-feeling-articles”)
- Publicity Campaigns

#### *Private forestry bodies*

A number of trade associations look after the interests of the private sector, providing information, some marketing services, and political lobbying. Among those representing the forest owners are:

- The Timber Growers Association representing about 2000 private woodland owners and businesses, who hold most of the commercial private woodland in the UK;
- The Country Landowners Association representing (usually large) landowners;
- In future, the farming unions may come to have a greater importance.
- The British Timber Merchants Association has more than 100 members in the sawmilling and merchant sectors, utilising British-grown timber.

The wood processing industry is represented variously by the Wood Panel Industries Federation, the Paper Federation of Great Britain, the UK Wood Processors Association and the UK Softwood Sawmillers Association.

The Forestry Industry Council of Great Britain, the Timber Industry Alliance and the Timber Trades Federation (TTF) bring together these interests, with a general view of promoting the cause of the forestry industry. TTF is the official voice of the UK timber trade. It represents timber importers, agents, distributors and other suppliers and users of wood and wood products. The Federation aims to create the best conditions for its members to trade successfully and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the industry. The Federation represents the industry’s views to the UK Government and the European Union and provides information, services and advice to its Members (Price and Samuels 1999).

The *Confederation of Forest Industries* (UK) Ltd (ConFor; [www.confor.org.uk](http://www.confor.org.uk)) has been jointly formed by the United Kingdom Forest Products Association (UKFPA) and the Forestry & Timber Association (FTA) to streamline and concentrate the industries’ voice. ConFor is currently working on a communication strategy. Along with its partners ConFor uses existing means of communication within the industry and press releases and publications to inform external audiences. ConFor also works as part of the Wood for Good marketing initiative and is currently seeking to employ an additional resource to target new audiences of opinion formers and decision makers and the business press. It is a principal objective of ConFor to develop cross-sectoral messages and actions so they organise meetings of all-industry to discuss specific issues and identify key actions and messages that ConFor and others can deliver. ConFor has developed good communication channels with wider industry and core Government departments as this is important to secure basic objectives. ConFor now needs to move beyond that to make contacts with audiences outside of the sector as these have influence over key issues related to forestry – the business environment or construction and renewable energy which could provide markets for wood products. ConFor sees specific activities related to certain issues as an

opportunity to get across broader messages about the sector and build up a picture that will help with long-term communication and attitude changing.

Supporting and influencing the forestry industry are a variety of professional and trade organizations such as the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF), the Association of Professional Foresters (APF), and the Forestry Contracting Association (FCA).

#### *Statutory forest-related organisations*

Under the 1967 Forestry Act, the Forestry Commission is required to consult with other relevant statutory authorities, such as local planning authorities, on applications for felling licences or woodland grants). In Scotland, local authorities are required to draw up Indicative Forestry Strategies, giving guidance about where (and to an extent, how) forest expansion would be encouraged, or unwelcome. Such strategies also exist in other UK local authorities. A number of other agencies, semi-independent of Government, can influence the nature of forestry, especially when forests are within designated areas. Particularly influential are the *Countryside Commission* and *English Nature (England)*, the *Countryside Council for Wales*, and *Scottish Natural Heritage*. These can award their own grants to aid or influence forestry operations (Price and Samuels 1999).

#### *Charities and pressure groups*

The *Councils for the Protection of Rural England/Wales* and *The National Trusts* have leaned towards maintaining the landscape status quo, as has the *Ramblers Association*. The *Royal Society for the Protection of Birds* is involved in forestry issues due to its interest in habitat for birds and as an owner of several woodlands. It has opposed afforestation when valued open habitats have been involved. *The World Wide Fund For Nature* has been actively involved in the setting up and running of the *Forest Stewardship Council's* and other certification schemes. Furthermore, the Woodland Trust (WT), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Wildlife Trusts (WTs), and the National Trust (NT) link with English Nature at local and national levels (Kirby, 2002).

Although these groups, and others that are more temporary or local, have in the past campaigned actively against afforestation, they now operate in more collaborative mode, with representation on some forestry committees. Increasingly, local residents are consulted on forest issues, though they do not yet have statutory powers in decision-making (Price and Samuels 1999).

### **5.4.2 Networks – Cooperation structures**

Within the sector's core there is regular contact. Initial steps have been made by the UK Forestry Commission and some of the other actors to investigate if there may be scope for the sector to agree on some common communications messages. Discussions are about to start on whether or not such cooperation will work, i.e. if such a move will bring benefits to the whole sector. When the general opinion on such an initiative is seen as positive by the whole sector, then further steps will be made, e.g. on questions concerning: what process; who will lead it; and which common messages could be found across the sector as a whole.

At present a few cooperative structures exist across the sector, mainly focussing on wood promotion:



### *Wood for Good*

Wood for Good has the mission to achieve a substantial and sustained change in attitudes towards wood, leading to an increase in consumption in the UK. Financial contributors are: the UK Forestry Commission, the Timber Trade Federation, the Confederation of Forest Industries, the Nordic Timber Council, the Northern Ireland Forest Service, and Timber Marketing Group. Its actions include: changing attitudes advertising campaign; product and environment advertising campaign; public relations; trade support.

The *Wood for Good* initiative is probably the forest sector's most extensive campaign undertaken in the United Kingdom. The initiative includes: a television commercial, press advertisements ('building with wood', 'living with wood', and an environmental campaign), awards, and competitions ([www.woodforgood.com](http://www.woodforgood.com)).

Some examples of recent activities:

- Wood for Good, together with their PR agency RED Communications, won the 'Best Use of PR' category in the Construction Marketing Awards, organised by EMAP Construction Network and supported by CIMCEIG (Chartered Institute of Marketing Construction and Engineering Industry Group).
- 'Wood on the Street' was a competition run by Wood for Good, in conjunction with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). It challenged young designers to develop proposals for a high profile London development. They were asked to design a mixed-use inner city scheme that could include leisure, retail, commercial and residential facilities, and involved new buildings and the refurbishment of existing structures.

### *Forests Forever*

Forests Forever was launched as an initiative by the Timber Trade Federation on behalf of all timber users and processors in the UK. Its broad aims are to help safeguard the forests of the world, Britain's future timber supplies and to promote the good cause of wood. Forests Forever is funded by a wide range of timber processors and users, forestry enterprises, timber importers and merchants, joinery firms and furniture makers, retailers and associated timber trade organisations ([www.forestsforever.co.uk](http://www.forestsforever.co.uk)).

Campaign aims are:

- To offer advice and information to the Government, other organisations and its Members on how to source timber and timber products responsibly.
- To campaign for the protection and good husbandry of forests and tree plantations worldwide.
- To support the designation and continuing existence of forests for environmental, social, timber and non-timber needs.
- To promote management policies which will ensure a continuous supply of timber from all designated productive forest lands.,
- To inform the public about resources of timber worldwide and the qualities which make wood the most environmentally beneficial material available to mankind.

Apart from its information campaigns (comprising a website and newsletters) on the use of timber, sustainability of timber, and on changing markets, the *Forests Forever* initiative is also involved in the Forest Education Initiative (FEI). This cross-sectoral initiative specifically addresses educational needs of children, young people and also teachers. The initiative aims to increase the understanding and appreciation of the

environmental, social, and economic potential of trees, woodlands and forests and of the link between the tree and everyday wood products.

The FEI provides free learning resources. Its practical work is achieved through local groups, who initiate and deliver various local projects such as developing woodland settings in school grounds, hosting INSET events for teachers or providing teaching packs about local trees, woods, forestry and forest industries.

#### *England Forestry Forum*

The England Forestry Forum was launched in 2000. The Forum is chaired by The Forestry Minister and administered by the Forestry Commission. The Forum comprises representatives of a wide range of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors with interests in forestry, rural affairs, the environment, land use planning, conservation and wildlife, recreation, heritage and archaeology. The Forum meets twice a year and shares and exchanges proposals for implementing the *Government's Forestry Strategy for England*, and monitor and review progress on implementing the Strategy.

Forty-seven recommendations are contained in a series of reports prepared by eight working groups established by the Forum to consider detailed issues relating to implementation of the Forestry Strategy (Forestry Commission 2005b).

Subject areas considered by the working groups include:

- business advice;
- training and support;
- land regeneration;
- regional issues;
- land use planning;
- protection of ancient woodlands;
- community forestry;
- landscape; and
- funding.

#### *National Tree Week*

National Tree Week is the Tree Council's festival to launch the start of the planting season and celebrate trees and woods.

#### *Active Woods*

The Forestry Commission's forests and health initiative, linking people's interests in healthy lifestyles with the benefits forests have to offer. A good example of making forests relevant to people's other interests

## 5.5 Discussion and Overview Country Case Studies

### 5.5.1 Overview Table

An overview of forest sector cooperation structures regarding communication in the four case-country studies is given in Table 5.

**Table 5** Summary table of case-country studies on forest sector cooperation and networking in forest sector communication.

	Forest Sector characteristics	Largest cooperation structures	Promotional Campaigns	Formal communication activities
Austria	Relatively important sector; Major exporter; Strongly linked actor network; Clientalism (corporatist structure)	Industry: ProHolz Austria and FPP (Forest Board Paper)	ProHolz Austria – consortium of the Austrian Forest and Wood Industry. Promote the commercialization of wood in Austria and abroad through marketing, advertising, and informing on wood. Directed at informing the general public on forestry and wood products, but also targeting architects, constructors, and wood products producers abroad. Image campaigns for forest industries, highlighting that forest utilization in terms of felling is a sustainable one; creating and maintaining platforms and networks; communicating on innovations in techniques and architecture.	The Austrian Forest Dialogue (NFP process) – long-term, continuous dialogue process. All interested organizations and persons are invited to participate. Focus is on the search for solutions for the frequent conflicts of interests concerning forests. Cross-sectoral communication on forest related issues is a side effect of this open, transparent and participatory policy formulation process.
Finland	Very important sector; Major exporter; Strongly linked actor network; Corporatist structure	Mainly the Finnish Forest Industries Federation, the Finnish Forest Association (FFA), and the Finnish	Wood Wisdom – a programme entity strengthening the knowledge base in the forest cluster across national borders and promoting the transfer of knowledge and technology to improve the competitiveness of the whole	Forest Forum for Decision Makers – long term, all stakeholders involved. A course and discussion forum on forest issues, directed at top-level decision-makers

		<p>Forest Foundation (FFF).</p> <p>With the FFA Finland has a unique cooperation structure, which unites all forest related actors in Finland, and aimed at communication on forests to society. The FFF is the major funder of these activities.</p>	<p>cluster.</p> <p>Forest.fi – a internet gateway to Finnish forests, forestry and the whole forest sector with information about forest practises and the importance of forests for the Finnish economy and the way of life.</p>	<p>throughout society</p> <p>NFP – working groups and public forums (over 3,000 participants). Based on the regional forestry programs, on the one hand, and on the other ideas and initiatives received from various parties and at numerous information and feedback meetings</p> <p>Working with schools, as initiated by the FFA, which incorporates a wide range of individual projects.</p>
Latvia	<p>Very important sector; export country; Strong role for the state</p>		<p>Forest Days (all major actors are involved) – people plant trees and clean up forests. There are lectures and field trips. Public buildings, roads and rural homes are improved with new plantings. In order to make the co-ordination of Forest Days more successful, Latvia's Forest Advisory Board in 2002 set up a special working group to organize the celebration. Its members come from a variety of institutions and organizations, and the work is coordinated by the Department of Forest Policy of the Ministry of</p>	<p>Latvian National Programme of the Forest Sector and Related Industries – state initiated program to ensure sustainable management of Latvia's forests, as well as the development of the forest sector and the related industries</p> <p>Forest Advisory Board – state actors and many different stakeholder groups cooperate to co-ordinate the activities of state and public organizations</p>

			<p>Agriculture. There is extensive co-operation with the mass media so as to popularize the ideas that are behind Forest Days and to provide information about when and where the various events will take place.</p>	<p>in promoting the development of the forest sector in Latvia</p>
United Kingdom	<p>Marginally important sector; Strong role for state; Major forest products importer</p>		<p>Wood for Good – to achieve a substantial and sustained change in attitudes towards wood, leading to an increase in consumption in the UK. Financial contributors are: the UK Forestry Commission, the Timber Trade Federation, the Confederation of Forest Industries, the Nordic Timber Council, the Northern Ireland Forest Service, and Timber Marketing Group. Its actions include: changing attitudes advertising campaign; product and environment advertising campaign; public relations; trade support</p> <p>Forests Forever was launched as an initiative by the Timber Trade Federation on behalf of all timber users and processors in the UK. Its broad aims are to help safeguard the forests of the world, Britain's future timber supplies and to promote the good cause of wood. Forests Forever is funded by a wide range of timber</p>	<p>England Forestry Forum is chaired by The Forestry Minister and administered by the Forestry Commission. The Forum comprises representatives of a wide range of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors with interests in forestry, rural affairs, the environment, land use planning, conservation and wildlife, recreation, heritage and archaeology. The Forum meets twice a year and shares and exchanges proposals for implementing the <i>Government's Forestry Strategy for England</i>, and monitor and review progress on implementing the Strategy.</p>

			processors and users, forestry enterprises, timber importers and merchants, joinery firms and furniture makers, retailers and associated timber trade organisations.	
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### **5.5.2 Best Practices – Lessons to be learned from the national level**

At the national level a number of initiatives are worth while mentioning again here, in order to identify some “best practices” which might benefit those people assessing the possibilities for improving – especially cross-sectoral, external – communication.

To start with Austria, this country has started a society-wide initiative to bring together a wide range of actors to cooperate in the formulation of a National Forest Program. This process has been named the Austrian Forest Dialogue. This initiative is truly cross-sectoral and has had a positive impact on the communication between the forest sector and other sectors and stakeholder groups in the sense that the dialogue has fostered a shared base of meaning, a mutual learning process so to speak. Compared to the European level, where such two-way communication processes only occur inside the forest sector and where sector external communication normally takes the form of instrumental, one-way communication, the principle of the Austrian Forest Dialogue is certainly one step ahead.

A similar initiative was found in Finland with the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers. Also this initiative brings together a wide range of stakeholders. The main goal is not so much to come to a National Forest Programme, but more to establish long lasting relationships with all relevant sectors and stakeholders and to learn from each other’s experiences. Finland can also be regarded unique, at least with respect to the other case-countries, for it has an organ (the Finnish Forest Association) specifically established by all relevant forest sector actors to commence joint communication with the rest of society on behalf of them all. The FFA is the organizer of the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers, and has its other spear points in communication with youth and journalists. The major industry and forestry actors share the costs for these activities via a construction named the Finnish Forest Foundation.

Latvia then, does not have such cross-sectoral initiatives as described above. The Latvian forest sector does have a long tradition in communicating with society through the organization of Forest Days. At these annual events the contact with the individual citizen is fostered directly, in local forests, by means of a wide variety of popular activities. These events have been successful in increasing the public’s understanding of the forest sector.

The forest sector in the United Kingdom – a major importing country of forest products – is not as important to the overall economy as in the other three countries. Forests do, however, have a very important recreational function and the forest sector (i.e. the forest authorities and forest owners) has been successful in establishing communication with society on the multiple roles of forests, in the sense that only minor conflicts between forest functions take place, and the public generally has a positive image of the country’s forests.

## 6 Conclusions

### 6.1 National level

#### 6.1.1 Sector Internal and External Communication

To make a general statement about national level forest sectors and their communication structures is difficult due to differences in national circumstances. The case-country studies have been useful in the sense that they identified a number of good examples of, particularly, cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder dialogues. In National Forest Programmes, for as far as they have been formulated, some mention is made of communication (e.g. in the context of concepts like public participation, stakeholder involvement, cross-sectoral activities), but clear communication action programmes are not developed any further than simply stressing that communication is important. The processes leading to National Forest Programmes (NFPs) are, however, cross-sectoral and involve a great range of stakeholder processes, so in that sense these processes can be seen as inter-sectoral, two-way communication.

Because forest policy is largely the responsibility of the national governments (or even regional governments in some cases) the policy network at the national level has had time to develop and to establish contact with other relevant sectors and stakeholders. Furthermore, countries where the forest sector makes up an important share of the national economy also seem to have a more strongly developed sector-internal as well as cross-sectoral dialogue – for example the Austrian Forest Dialogue or the Finnish Forest Forum for Decision-Makers. Concerning the latter examples, an obvious explanation might be that other sectors are more likely to be willing to communicate with the forest sector if it represents a strong economic force. In addition, in e.g. Finland the forest sector has long since established an institution (Finnish Forest Association) that deals with common communication goals of the whole sector, thus strengthening cooperation within the sector. In Austria a more or less comparable structure exists, the Austrian Forest Association. Most promotional communication in Austria is however done through industry led initiatives (i.e. ProHolz). Based on the information on other European countries (mainly EU 15) one can say that sector internal communication ranges from reasonable to very good. Especially governmental extension services and national and regional forest owner/forestry associations do their utmost to communicate with forest owners/managers. In most cases this communication succeeds, although new groups of forest owners (e.g. people living in the cities, female forest owners, and new forest owners without prior experience) deserve some extra attention.

In the new EU member states some efforts still have to be made to strengthen both internal as well as external communication. National initiatives are being initiated to improve the situation (e.g. the increased attention in Latvia to strengthen information flow within the sector). Communication skills of forest sector representatives seem to have benefited from initiatives to bring these people together with colleagues from other countries (e.g. via cooperation in the Forest Communicators Network, and the forums of the Forest Academy Finland).

It also appeared that countries with a long forestry tradition and a strong forest sector have relatively little problems concerning the image of the sector among the public. But even in a country with a relatively small forest sector (e.g. the United Kingdom) the image of the country's forest sector is quite positive. Extensive communication efforts by the forest authorities – focussing on easy (accessible) and attractive information – and to some extent also the recent promotional campaigns by the united forest industries (aided by the Nordic Timber Council) appear to have had success. This does not mean that the



public necessarily has a good understanding of the activities of the forest sector or forest policy, but as long as the general public's opinion on forests and forest products is positive this does not seem to be a problem. However, according to European wide studies the image of the forest sector, i.e. forest-based industries, is not so positive in a number of countries. In the countries analyzed this, however, did not come forward as being a major obstacle.

Promotional campaigns, aimed at a large audience, are a relatively new activity in most countries, but it seems that the sectors have been able to establish large-scale cooperation (i.e. in Austria and the United Kingdom). Although the campaigns are apparently set up with the basic communication principles in mind (e.g. identifying target groups, adjusting messages, appealing to target groups etc.), it of course remains to be seen what the effects of such campaigns will be. Evaluation of the effect of campaigns is however difficult. In Finland and the UK public opinion polls are used as evaluation tools.

It has to be mentioned that cooperation between national forest sectors is not that strongly developed. Large forest industry companies have of course cross-boundary activities, but for the sector as a whole a closer cooperation and exchange of experiences (like in the Forest Academy Finland and the Forest Communicators Network) will certainly benefit the national forest sectors.

## **6.2 European level**

### **6.2.1 Sector Internal Communication**

The forest sector at the European Union level is a small world; everyone knows everyone, and everyone meets everyone at various meetings. Cooperation in communication efforts is however only just starting. Increasing networking within the sector, and strengthening cooperation will certainly benefit the effectiveness of the sector's communication with society. National, industry led, promotional campaigns are already cooperating to some extent, but to have a single vehicle to promote EU forest industry products could decrease competition between countries within the EU and would strengthen competitive power with countries outside the EU.

These approaches are however only one part of what the concept of communication comprises. Most of the time, when talking about communication, people in the forest sector are referring to an instrumental way of communicating – informing instead of listening. If the forest sector wants to really improve its image, it has to meet societal demand, which in turn means that the sector also has to listen to society. This is what the sector is increasingly doing now. Yet, the forest sector is still better at listening to the actors within its own sector than to other sectors.

The forest sector lobbies and negotiates internally as well as externally with other sectors. Some formal and many informal structures of communication exist within the sector, at the national level and at the international level (mainly EU, and to a certain extent also UNECE/FAO). The individual actors within the forest sector at the EU level have a close connection to each other and are involved in a considerable number of communication structures. In this study it appeared that the FBI federations and other relevant forestry stakeholder groups have a closer connection with EU institutions than with UNECE/FAO institutions. At a more personal level, however, federations' representatives and EU representatives are at a more personal level regularly involved in UNECE/FAO communication structures (e.g. the Teams of Specialists). Another observation could be that there are no formal links between EU communication structures (Fig 12) and

UNECE/FAO communication structures (Fig 13). The closest links between EU and UNECE/FAO might be via Eurostat.

A new challenge arose with the accession of the new Member States to the EU, whose links with the EU institutions are not as established as the “old” Member States’ links. Consequently, also the contact between the new Member States’ forest sector representatives and the forest sector people in “Brussels”, i.e. policy and administration, are in need of strengthening.

The sector is actively searching for joint messages, strengthening their cooperation, and it seems that there is a clear division of what can be done together and what is done individually. Efforts like a communication strategy for the whole Forest Based Industries (FBI) sector (in cooperation with Directorate General Enterprise) are a good example for this. What is lacking, however, is a established structure where the whole sector – so not only the EU officials in Brussels, but also the major national forest sector representatives, and the UNECE/FAO officials – engages in truly, two-way communication to learn from each other experiences and to learn about each other. Up till now only the Forest Communicators Network (FCN) comes close to such a structure. The FCN, however, experienced problems related to the voluntary character of the network, including the lack of resources (all activities are carried out voluntarily by the FCN’s members in their free-time) and the difficulty of managing the network without continued funding for a secretariat. Another obstacle to overcome is that certain countries – including countries where forestry is an important sector of the economy – are underrepresented in the network (e.g. Germany). The recently established Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform might develop into a truly sector wide communication structure, although this depends on the role other actors (smaller stakeholder groups within the sector) besides forest industries and science are allowed to play.

### **6.2.2 Sector External Communication**

The overall aim of the forest sector (forest policy makers, forest owners/forestry, forest-based industries, forest science) appears to be to improve its image with the general public. Large campaigns to try to reach everyone are, however, unmanageable for a variety of reasons. Costs, effectiveness, heterogeneity of the target group, lack of interest of the public are probably the obvious obstacles. In addition, the matter of who is responsible for what has to be taken in to account – which communication (with whom) should be carried out by which actor at which level (i.e. individual companies, national federations, or European federations). The necessity of incorporating the basic elements of successful communication – to be able to identify the right target groups, to interest them with messages they can understand – are not always realized well enough. Neither does one fully realize the value of communication as a strategic, political tool. Attention for improving communication has, however, increased. For instance, at the European level the forest sector is trying to set up a framework for national actors to improve external communication and at the national level the forest sector tries to reach a wide audience with a mix of more attractive informational tools. A positive development is that the forest sector is now more intensely focusing on a number of the most relevant target groups, namely, policy-makers from sectors other than forestry, major users of wood (builders and architects), children/schools, professional forestry education, and the media, both specialist and general. By reaching these target groups one can also indirectly reach other groups in society. Another important goal for the forest sector (e.g. forest policy makers at the EU level) is to convince (other) policy makers at the EU level to deal with

the fragmentation of forest policy and to work on a more integrated policy framework for forests, forestry, and forest-based industry.

It has not been easy for the forest sector to communicate with society, especially because the forest sector has for a long time been communicating reactively in the case of “emergencies” – bad news on the state of Europe’s forests, criticism from environmental NGOs (eNGOs) etc. The sector is starting to realize now that it is better to start communicating pro-actively – spread the “good news” about the sector’s activities. Such good news messages have to be brought in “ready to eat” chunks to the target groups, because only a small number of people know what is meant with statements like *forest cover is increasing* and *forests are managed in a sustainable manner*. The forest sector certainly has good messages to spread, but these have to be formulated a bit more attractively and also presented that way. Input of professional marketers may prove to be a positive contribution. On the other hand, one also has to be realistic and consider the given fact that presenting “good news stories” is no guarantee for successful communication – reaching your communication objectives. Put more bluntly, it is hard to imagine that the forest sector can reach a large crowd by simply giving off some happy messages.

Furthermore, one of the greatest challenges is to enable people to make the link between on the one hand, the wood they appreciate so much and the forests – where the wood comes from – they so joyfully experience at the weekend, and the forest industry on the other hand. This discrepancy is twofold; in the first place there is a discrepancy between people having a bad image of the forest’s condition versus having a good image of the forests they walk in. The second discrepancy is the good image people have of wood and of forest management versus the bad image they have of the forest industry – the slaughterhouse paradox. One might of course also choose to leave this discrepancy untouched and simply focus on strengthening the positive images of forests and wood to the larger public, and try to improve the forest industry’s image by focussing on very specific target groups, those groups that are most relevant to the forest industry (e.g. future employees). That, however, might not prove sufficient in the long run. The forest sector has, therefore, to ask itself if it is prepared to invest effort into being ready to answer to current issues “fast, loud and proud”. Put more eloquently, to come up with its own messages – while at the same time being realistic about the degree of interest the public at large may or may not have towards these messages – to anticipate pro-actively (issue raising) in order to be effectively reactive.

In order for the forest sector to receive a social license to operate they will have to find a way to tackle the problems discussed above. Probably the only way to convince society at large of the sustainability of forestry and forest-based industries is to show people. In some countries this is more difficult than in others. In Scandinavia, forestry and forest-based industries have and have had a (relatively) good image because most people have more connections to the forest. In other European countries, where there is relatively less forest per capita and where the mental distance between forestry practice and urban values has increased more rapidly the task to communicate with people on forests is a bigger challenge. In order to show people what is actually going on in the forest – which may or may not resemble the image eNGOs have spread – one needs the help of others. The fastest way would be via the media: taking journalists to the forest and showing them on the ground. One would have to first catch their interest, which might prove troublesome in a world with so many, ostensibly more interesting, stories to publish.

A second approach is to interest children – often named *tomorrow's decision-makers* as well as the future employees of the forest industry – for forest issues via schools. Only through thorough cooperation with teachers do such initiatives stand a chance. In this respect the power of “modern” technological teaching materials, like television, CDs, and DVDs should be taken into consideration. One has to be cautious, however, because depending on the motives behind the whole idea of communicating with children forest industry initiatives may be seen as disguised recruiting activities, instead of genuinely wanting to educate children. This relates to the difficulty of finding joint messages in the sense that different actors in the forest sector might have different motives and messages they want to spread to children.

A third way to reach a larger public is to try and influence people via the people that build their houses and furniture, namely architects and builders.

Referring to the different forms of communication discussed in this report – one-way informing activities (Public Relations or PR), lobbying, and joint, two-way communication – the forest sector should ask itself if there is room for joint, two-way communication processes with various stakeholders in their communication strategies. According to literature such, more inclusive, processes are a more suitable way to establish long-lasting relations with other stakeholder groups than PR or lobbying activities. PR of course is useful and can have some positive effect on people's knowledge and image of the sector, although such an impact is hard to measure. Lobbying is a two-way (face-to-face) mode of communication and, if conducted properly, it can have a positive effect on the relationship between and the understanding of actors. But still, lobbying is mostly limited to political agenda matters, whereas genuine joint, two-way communication processes are more than that. These processes enable, ideally, a host of actors (both in and outside of the sector) – without being too overly subject to matters of political agenda – to get to know each other, engage in joint meaning creation, learn from each other's viewpoints etc.

It has to be said that the actors, individually, do communicate with actors outside of the sector, on a personal basis or acting out of their organization's interest. The sector as a whole, so as one group, is not, however, very successful in communicating with the outside world – other sectors. Some successful initiatives exist, but mainly at the national level, not at the European level.

Focused activities by the forest sector to establish relationships with specific target groups are a first step towards increasing contact with other sectors and stakeholders. The forest sector at the European level can, however, learn from the national level in the sense that the latter has a better developed inter-sectoral dialogue. Although core actors in the sector are closely cooperating, they have not managed yet to set up a truly cross-sectoral dialogue between the forest sector and the other relevant sectors and interest groups. One reason might be that, i.e. at the European level, the most relevant actors (read: high level actors) from other sectors have only limited interest in communicating with the forest sector. After all, there are many other interests for them to pursue – the forest sector is only one of many sectors. Furthermore, the lack of tradition in forest policy making at the European level also makes it difficult to follow the national examples. To convince other sectors and other policy makers, e.g. at the EU level, of the relevance of the forest sector is a major challenge for the years to come.

It has to be repeated here that due to limits in time and resources the definition of the forest sector has been kept quite strict, in the sense that only policy making bodies dealing

with forest issues at the European level (and for the case studies, the national level) and forest owner-, management- and industry federations (at national and European level) have been surveyed in this study. The importance of incorporating environmental and social NGOs is most certainly recognized, and hopefully a study on the cooperation and networking activities in forest communication of these organizations will take place in the near future.

## 7 Recommendations

### 7.1 Target groups

The major difficulty is to get other decision-makers – and especially the “opinion leaders” amongst them – interested in forest issues. Effort should be made to find ways to gain the interest of e.g. Members of the European Parliament. One way that seems to be effective is to let national forest sector representatives contact their own MEPs, in order to interest them on forest issues (at the EU level).

The path some actors in the forest sector have taken regarding communication strategies should be followed by others or, even better, by the sector as a whole. This would mean that specific focus is placed on strengthening communication with the following target groups<sup>39</sup> - and again, especially the opinion leaders is these groups – and remembering the ‘golden rule’ of *showing is better than telling*:

- Schools: youth initiatives are best started in cooperation with teachers from the very beginning – a mutual learning experience etc. Special attention should then be given to attractive teaching materials (DVDs, internet) and by actually going into the forest.
- Media: to hire a PR professional is one step towards intensifying and fostering contacts (networking and personal contacts) with the media, another step might be to invite journalists and editors to excursions in the forest.
- Architects and builders: organizing competitions for constructing buildings with wood, or making photo books of wooden buildings are good examples of current initiatives trying to interest architects and builders. A point worth examining is what can be done to increase wood-construction education in the curricula of architects and builders.
- Universities: in the light of the changes taking place in forestry curricula at universities across Europe – more and more focus is shifted towards environmental management in general – universities also form a target group. One of the topics worth studying (which DG ENTR is planning now) is how much attention forestry curricula are currently paying to wood-technology, which is a very relevant field for the FBI sector in relation to the skills of its future employees.

Concerning eNGOs as a target group for communication, the matter of mandates has to be brought up. Although FBI umbrella federations might want to engage in joint projects with eNGOs, the umbrella federations cannot always do so because they lack the mandate – their national federations see this as their responsibility. Better coordination of such activities can, however, can best be achieved at the European level.

Depending on how it will actually develop, and which actors (within or maybe even outside the direct forest sector core) are allowed to play which role, the Forest-based Sector Technology Platform will hopefully in any case try to answer the following questions:

- Do individual industries know of research work done by forest research institutes, which could benefit them?

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<sup>39</sup> In line with the subsidiarity principle, EU level forest sector federations communicate with other sectors’ federations at the EU level, whereas national forest sector federations communication with other sectors’ national federations.

- Is the forest research community actively doing something to get its work to become more noticed by the forest based industries?

## 7.2 Messages

A start for any cooperation initiative between organizations, especially in the case of such a heterogeneous group as the forest sector (owners, managers, harvesters, processing industry, policy makers/administrators etc. at various levels and institutions, and science) should be the search for joint messages or joint interests to fuel messages.

At the EU level, one of the messages the COM is trying to put forward to the Council and the EP is that there is a need for a more structured approach for forest issues – an approach that clearly remains multifunctional and is nationally adjustable.

Another expressed need is to try to go one step further than adopting resolutions declaring intentions, thereby coming to a working system (including objectives, deadlines and reporting).

Whether these messages are picked up depends on the persistence of the senders, because it is clear that they are not the only ones who try to influence the Council and the EP.

In order to reach a broader public, national FBI organizations and other relevant organizations (e.g. forester's organizations, state forestry services etc.) are starting to use simple messages that evoke positive images – emotion being an important concept here<sup>40</sup>. For example:

- *More wood is growing than is being cut*
- *Forests sequester CO<sub>2</sub> – combat climate change*
- *Wood is recyclable*
- *Wood is a sustainable, strong yet flexible, construction material*

Forest policy makers and FBI umbrella organizations increasingly understand that the majority of people are not interested in facts in the form of figures. It appears that more attractive media, especially visual methods, are needed to get to the public. Evoking emotion with “warm, friendly images” and using simple slogans are very useful in this respect – something Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) have understood already for a long time. A good example in this respect is the “Nordic Family Forestry” network ([www.nordicforestry.org](http://www.nordicforestry.org)), which uses images most people can relate to – everyone can place the concept family in his/her frame of reference – and which evokes positive feelings. In short, the incorporation of the basic elements required for creating meaning in communication processes is a major challenge for the forest sector's external communication, and attention should be paid to it accordingly.

## 7.3 Means of Communication and Strategies

In order to be able to give itself a fair chance of improving its image, the forest sector has to ask itself if it is prepared to invest effort into being ready to give answers to current issues “fast, loud and proud”. Put more eloquently, to come up with its own messages – while at the same time being realistic about the degree of interest the public at large may or may not have towards these messages – to anticipate pro-actively (issue raising) in order to be effectively reactive.

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<sup>40</sup> For the author it remains unclear as to how much the EU level actors influenced these national initiatives.

Such efforts need to be made notwithstanding:

- A growing awareness of the necessity for two-way communication with other sectors and stakeholders – to truly understand the world outside the sector and to “grow” understanding for the forest sector; and
- policy statements (see the chapter on Policy Background) stressing the importance of networking and cooperation in communication;

Still the forest sector’s communication mix (as written down in communication strategies) contains a large portion of one-way, information distribution (instrumental communication). It appears that the sector does not yet fully realize the value of two-way communication as a strategic, political tool.

In order to learn which opinions live in society only true communication – listening as well as speaking – can give answers. It might be a good development to assess whether more attention could be given to joint, two-way communication processes involving a wider range of stakeholders than only the ‘usual suspects’ in the sector – the latter coming closer to negotiation style lobbying.

Joint two-way communication processes have limitations. Firstly, the number of participants should remain small in order for the process to remain effective, which means that large-scale conferences with people listening to key-note speakers cannot be seen as true two-way processes; the smaller group discussions, however, can. Secondly, the selection of relevant participants and getting them interested in participation requires time and effort. In order to strengthen cross-sectoral communication at the EU level such processes strongly depend on the people you manage to engage in them.

External lobbying, for example with MEPs, has proven difficult. Through various activities the FBI federations try to reach decision-makers, but the competition with other sectors’ lobbying efforts is high and thus the fight for attention is a heavy one. Personal networks are essential in this respect, and contact with MEPs often runs indirectly: EU level FBI federations ask national level FBI federations to contact their national Member of the European Parliament.

As regards communication activities, i.e. instrumental communication, but also lobbying and joint two-way communication, efforts should be made to try and assess the effectiveness of these activities.

#### **7.4 Responsibilities and cooperation in communication**

There is no joint body focussing on communication at the European level. There is some cooperation between the EU level FBI umbrella federations, as well as some cooperation between the federations and DG Enterprise at the EU level. But no body exists which brings together both EU level as well as national forest sector actors in order to facilitate cooperation in communication. To achieve this funds have to be re-distributed (if possible) and a strong mandate should be given to such a body.

Also the national forest sectors would benefit from increased international cooperation, especially in PR campaigns. Recent good examples are the initiatives of the Nordic Timber Council, which has, jointly with national partners, set up campaigns in various European countries. Such cooperation could take a next step by setting up a European



wide initiative, under the same name, thereby being a symbol for the united European forest sector (i.e. forest-based industries).

In spite of statements made on the strong ties within the forest sector at the European level, it still might be worthwhile to see how formal cooperation between EU and UNECE/FAO can be strengthened.

As relationships take a while to be established, extra effort should be made to (1) strengthen the ties between the new EU member states' forest sectors and the relevant EU institutions and EU level forest sector federations; and (2) to strengthen the ties between the new EU member states' forest sectors and the other EU countries' forest sectors. The forums of the Forest Academy Finland have been a first step in this respect, and also the annual meetings of European State Forestry Services heads are a good way to increase cooperation between countries' forest sectors.

More research is definitely needed, e.g. on the relations and communication of the forest sector with other key organizations that have high stakes in forest issues, especially environmental NGOs. The forest sector would also benefit from a benchmarking study on other sectors' cooperation and networking in communication.

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## Appendix I: List of interviewees

- Buck, Alexander (Deputy Executive Secretary, IUFRO) [telephone interview]
- Buckley, Michael (former AHEC European Director, now Turnstone Communications) [telephone interview]
- Burt, Bob (Canadian Forest Service, communication expert and deputy leader of the FCN) [telephone interview]
- Engelbrecht, Per-Ove (head of unit Forest-based and Related Industries at DG Enterprise)
- Galembert, de, Bernard (CEPI)
- Gschwandtl, Ingwald (Austrian “Umweltministerium” and Team Leader for the Forest Communicators Network) [telephone interview]
- Haber, Jean-Pierre (unit Forest-based and Related Industries at DG Enterprise)
- Hellström, Eeva (Director of the Forest Forum for Decision-Makers & Coordinator of the Forest Academy Finland)
- Hogl, Karl (Director of the Institute for Forest, Environment and Resource Policy, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna)
- Hufnagl, Natalie (CEPF)
- Janatuinen, Aila (Department Manager Finnish Forest Industries Federation)
- Jokinen, Hannu (Director of Forestry, Metsähallitus)
- Karjula, Matti (Senior Vice President of Timber Procurement Finland at StoraEnso)
- Karvonen, Juhani (Executive Director Finnish Forest Association, deputy leader of the FCN)
- Kazusa, Lauma (Research Assistant, expert on Baltic forestry, European Forest Institute)
- Kivelä, Pekka (Director of Communication, Metsäliitto)
- Mayer, Peter (Executive Secretary, IUFRO, former MCPFE liaison unit)
- Morton, Colin (UK forestry commission, and FCN member) [telephone interview]
- Ottitsch, Andreas (Program Manager Forest Products, Markets and Socio Economics, European Forest Institute).
- Peck, Tim (former Director of the FAO/UNECE Agriculture and Timber Division and first Chairman of the Board of the European Forest Institute)
- Pepke, Ed (FAO Forest Products Marketing Officer, Timber section)
- Michael Pregernig (Institute for Forest, Environment and Resource Policy, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna)
- Prins, Kit (Chief of UNECE Timber Branch, Trade Development and Timber Division)
- Rametsteiner, Ewald (Institute for Forest, Environment and Resource Policy, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna)
- Ruusila, Anu (External Relations Manager, European Forest Institute)
- Salpakivi-Salomaa, Päivi (Director of Environmental Forestry Affairs, UPM-Kymmene) [telephone interview]
- Serrano, Paula (Communication Officer at CEI-BOIS)
- Szedlak, Tamas (DG Agriculture)
- Tikkanen, Ilpo (Program Manager Forest Policy Analysis, European Forest Institute)
- Valtanen, Hannu (Director of Forest Policy, Finnish Forest Industries Federation)
- Velde, van de, Joost (DG Environment)



## Appendix II: Questionnaire on European Co-operation and Networking in Forest Communication

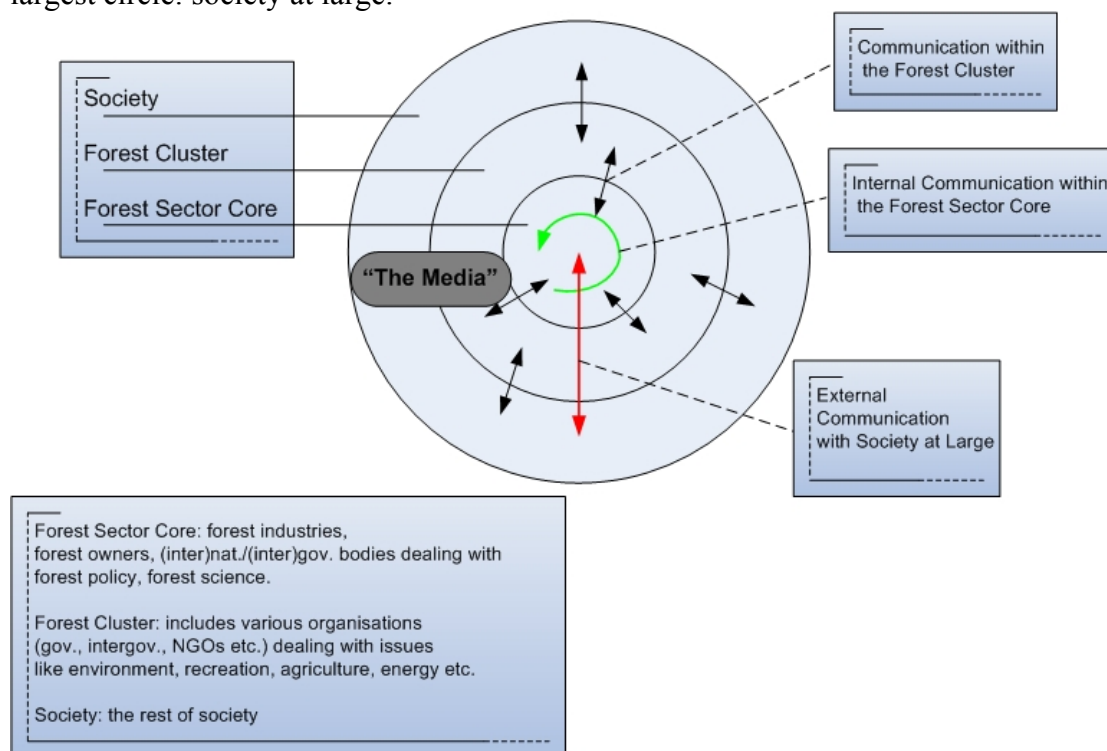
Please list name, organization and position

### Motives and strategy

1. What are your motives for communication, and on whose behalf do you communicate?
2. Do you have a written communication strategy (if so, could you perhaps attach it to your answer?)? If not, could you tell something about your communication actions (ad hoc or systematic; resources; 1-way versus 2-way communication)?

### Target groups

If we try to visualize the forestry sector and its surroundings, the following picture can be drawn (see figure below). A central circle containing the forestry core (forest industry, forest owners, (inter)national bodies dealing with forest policy, state forestry administrations) is surrounded by (or fall into) a larger circle containing a wide array of interest groups, and (inter)national organizations with an interest in forests (e.g. environmental, agricultural, recreation organisations), which in turn also falls within the largest circle: society at large.



3. Could you please list with whom (which target groups **A**) **within the forest sector core**, **B**) **in the forest cluster**, and **C**) **in society at large**) you are communicating, and please indicate their importance to you (1 = least important, 10 is most important)?

A. Within the forest sector core	
B. Within the forest cluster	
C. In society at large	

4. What role does cross-sectoral communication have in your organisation's strategy – how is it formulated in your strategy statements?
5. With which groups do you have a good communication, and why? And with which groups you would like to improve your communication, and why is that needed?

#### Communication content

6. Could you please indicate how much effort you spend on/how important you consider the following aspects of communication (e.g. x% A, y%B)?
  - A. Long-term communication for increasing the level of knowledge in forest issues, without a strong lobbying attempt for actual issues (e.g. communication with school children and other target groups)
  - B. Short-term communication about actual issues (e.g. campaigns)
7. What is it that you want to communicate, what are your messages?  
Think for instance of the following rough categories (please mention if that message is meant for within the sector, or external):

	Forest sector internal	External from the forest sector
Image of the forest sector		
Image of wood products		
Increasing knowledge on forest issues		
Sustainable Forest Management		
Bio-energy use		
Other, please name		
.....		
.....		

.....		
.....		

8. Where do you receive your information from (what sources do you use in your communication)? Please indicate the importance by giving a 1 (=least important) to 10 (=most important).

	Research institutes
	Reports/journals by scientific community
	Reports by forest industry
	Report by governmental organisations
	Reports by NGOs (e.g. environmental, social)
	Meetings with scientists, forest industry people, and governmental representatives
	Other (please specify).....
	Other (please specify).....
	Other (please specify).....

**Communication tools**

9. Could you please indicate the tools or groups of tools (and their strengths and weaknesses if applicable) you use to communicate with the outside world (partners, customers, “the public” etc.)? Please indicate by giving a 1 (=least important) to 10 (=most important).

	Strength	Weakness
Advertising		
Face to face		
Website		
Newsletters		
Publications		
Exhibitions		
Presentations		
Educational activities		
Forums		
Other, please specify.....		
Other, please specify.....		

**Differences between target groups**

10. Do you have different messages to different target groups? Do you use different tools to reach different target groups? Please explain or exemplify.

**General effectiveness**

11. Have you set targets for your communication activities? If so, what are they?
12. Do you evaluate your communication activities? If so, please describe the method of your evaluation, and how you would then evaluate the success of your communication strategy – in terms of the targets you have reached, and targets you have not fully reached (yet)?
13. What do you think still can be improved in your communication strategy?

**Network**

When keeping in mind the distinction between communication on behalf of the interest of the organisation itself, and communication on behalf of the whole forest sector (e.g. communication networks):

14. What communication do you want to practice yourself, and together with others? Why?
15. Could you please list the organizations with whom you co-operate and indicate how important they are to you (1 = least important, 10 = most important)? Please indicate for each organization if you consider your communication with them to be cross-sectoral or forest sector internal.

	...
	...

16. What type of co-operation is needed? (e.g. With whom? On what issues? On what level (regional, national, European, global))?
17. Could you please mention some successful co-operation projects or networking initiatives in communication (like for instance the Forest Communicators Network)?
18. What difficulties have you experienced in co-operation and networking in communication issues?  
For example: commitment, resources, finding a joint message...
19. Do you think that communication is sufficiently addressed in forest policy strategies (e.g. in NFPs)?

## Appendix III: Practical Guidelines for Setting Up Communication

In the beginning of this paper there was already some mention of what to keep in mind upon starting communication. Based on the theoretical considerations presented in this chapter these “questions one has to ask oneself” are elaborated below. Although at first sight these remarks might come across as being open doors, it still might be useful to have some key point summed up and to emphasize that successful communication depends on knowing exactly why you want to communicate<sup>41</sup>:

### Analyse the situation:

- What is the real problem that has to be solved?
- Why do you think communication is necessary?

### Identify stakeholder groups:

To determine the right target groups, you first have to analyse the stakeholder groups – all the people or organisations that are involved in the issue you want to communicate about.

To identify stakeholder groups, you ask yourself the following questions:

- Primary stakeholders:
  - o Whose permission, approval or (financial) support do I need to reach my goal?
  - o Who is directly affected by the plan or activity?
  - o Who will benefit? Who will suffer loss or damage?
- Secondary stakeholders:
  - o Who is indirectly affected?
- Tertiary stakeholders:
  - o Who is not directly involved, but can influence opinions?

### Setting targets:

- What is the goal?
- What do you want to achieve with communication?

Is this realistic and feasible?

Can you achieve your goal by using communication?

Who are your target groups?

Can you reach your target group?

### Deciding on action:

- What message do you want to give to the target group?
- What do you want them to know, feel, or do?
- Which means and channels do you choose to get this message to the target group in the most efficient and direct way?
- Which means of communication could you use and how can you ensure that these means actually reach the target group?

### Implementation:

- How much time and money is needed for each step?
- How long will each step take?

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<sup>41</sup> This summary of guidelines is based on Kovacs and Rientjes (2000).

### Ad Message: Some advice on developing a good message

#### *Begin with the good news and not with the controversial issue*

Always try to find a positive opening for your message. Begin with the things you and your target group have in common - the things you agree on. If you open your message with a list of differences of opinion, you will antagonise your target group immediately. Begin with what has already been achieved, and then mention what was not successful.

#### *Speak in the language of others*

Whether your message will be delivered in a brochure, a video-film, a letter, a speech, a scientific journal or a face to face meeting, you have to deliver it in a way that your target group will understand and appreciate. A first step is to check whether your text is understandable to the education level of your target group. But speaking the language of others goes further. It means that ideas, examples and even the jokes you use have to be selected from the perspective of the others.

#### *Make clear what you want*

If you are communicating with a target group because you want them to do something, this should be very clear. Your target group should know what you would like them to do, and how they should go about doing it.

### Ad Means and channels: How to select communication means

#### *The communication pattern of the target group*

To assess whether a particular means of communication is suitable for a particular target group, you have to know where they normally get their information. There is no point making lots of information available on the Internet if your target group does not use computers. A brochure is of no use if people can only get it at your head office, a long way from where they live. This is a question of exposure to communication. But the target group must not only be exposed to the communication, they must also notice it. A small announcement in a newspaper can easily be overlooked, and even a leaflet delivered door to door can get lost among all the junk mail. This is a question of perception.